

Soviet envoy: Syria ties strong

DAMASCUS (R) — Soviet Ambassador to Syria Alexander Zorov said Wednesday that Syrian-Soviet relations were strong and criticized Western media for trying to ruin these ties. Addressing a news conference at his embassy in the Syrian capital Zorov said reporters who interviewed him in Damascus and Moscow recently did not tell the full story he wanted to convey. The Washington Post quoted Zorov as saying Moscow had encouraged Syria to abandon its aim of strategic parity with Israel. Asked whether the published interview was accurate, Zorov said: "One of the reasons which led me to request this conference was to repeat exactly what I said to journalists here and in Moscow about Syrian-Soviet relations." Zorov said he was asked whether there were difficulties and replied by saying he was big matter there are difficulties "which we learn to solve in a friendly atmosphere which suits the strategic nature of ties." He said Moscow was committed to its pledges to extend military support to Syria to protect its security and fully understood that a weak country could not ensure a just peace.

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San Salvador siege over

SAN SALVADOR (R) — Twelve U.S. soldiers who for more than a day defied leftist rebels holding a San Salvador hotel annex left the building with hands high on Wednesday after the guerrillas abandoned their siege. The crack Green Beret soldiers, who had barricaded themselves on the sixth floor of the VIP annex of the hotel, departed in two pickup trucks and were driven to safety at a Salvadoran military installation. A special U.S. force sent by President George Bush was outside the hotel to rescue the Green Berets if needed. The soldiers apparently had been free to leave since Tuesday night, when an agreement was reached freeing the last of 57 civilians trapped in the hotel. But U.S. officials said they decided to wait until daylight so stairs and escalators could be swept for mines and they could be sure no snipers were waiting outside. A homemade rebel mine was found at the entrance to the building. Severity of the people trapped in the hotel, including the secretary-general of the Organisation of American States (OAS) Jose Benito Soares, were released Tuesday afternoon. Another 17 were freed Tuesday night after the rebels reached an agreement to free them. The rebels themselves left during the night.

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Muawwad assassinated

Combined Agency dispatches

BEIRUT — Newly elected president Rene Muawwad was killed in a powerful, remote-controlled bomb explosion in west Beirut Wednesday, 17 days after his election. He was 64.

Twenty-three other people, some of them Syrian and Lebanese army escorts, also were killed and 36 were wounded, police said.

Chief police sapper, Mohammad Khashab, said the explosion was caused by 250 kilograms of explosives hidden in small shop and detonated by remote control. He denied earlier reports that a car which was set ablaze by the blast had contained the explosives.

The explosion blasted Muawwad's motorcade as it passed through the Sanayeh district at 1:50 p.m. (1150 GMT).

Witnesses said some of the dead were blown to pieces and parts of their bodies thrown 500 metres down the road.

A senior police officer told Reuters that Muawwad's corpse was so charred and mutilated it took more than an hour to identify it.

Two Lebanese army cars and two cars used by Syrian plain-

clothesmen were at the head of the motorcade. Police said all their occupants were either dead or wounded.

"Where is the president... where is the president?" shouted a bleeding bodyguard in the confusion following the blast.

One police officer at the site shouted: "We don't have a president anymore."

Prime Minister-designate Salim Al Hoss and Parliament Speaker Hussein, who were driving behind Muawwad in the 10-car convoy, escaped unharm.

Hoss announced Muawwad's death in a bomb explosion similar to that killed President-elect Bashir Gemayel, 34, on Sept. 14, 1982, only 22 days after his election.

"It is a national disaster," Hoss said in a radio address to the country. "President Rene Muawwad was assassinated by the hand of treason," he said, his voice breaking with emotion. The announcement was made 2 1/2



Rene Muawwad

hours after the explosion.

Earlier, police spokesmen insisted that Muawwad had survived the attempt. They would not explain why news of his death was held for so long.

Police said the fatalities included six Syrian soldiers and seven Lebanese army troops of the unit assigned to protect the president. Muawwad's aide de camp also was killed.

The blast was so powerful that it hurled the president's blue bullet-proof Mercedes limousine, several metres off the two-way Bustros Boulevard.

Muawwad is survived by a wife, Nayla Khoury, and two children — Rima, 22, and Michel, 17.

Muawwad, Hoss and Hussein were heading for their respective homes from an independence day ceremony at the government house in the Sanayeh district when the blast jolted the city.

Hoss and Hussein convened "crisis talks" to prepare for a quick parliament session to elect a successor to Muawwad, a statement released by Hoss' office said.

It stressed that they were trying to avoid political vacuum that would undermine a Christian-Muslim peace pact which parliament approved at a special session in Saudi Arabia last month.

Hardline Christian leader Michel Aoun opposed the pact and Muawwad's election on Nov. 5. He called the president a "Syrian lackey." He made no immediate comment after Muawwad's assassination.

West Beirut's streets emptied Wednesday from all but Syrian soldiers and Lebanese policemen. Residents apparently feared outbreak of shelling duels between Aoun's troops and allied Syrian and Lebanese forces.

Hundreds of Syrian soldiers and Lebanese army troops and policemen converged on the scene.

Jordan: Muawwad killing an Arab tragedy

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Wednesday expressed deep sadness and sorrow over the assassination of the newly-elected president of Lebanon, Rene Muawwad, who was killed in a bomb blast in west Beirut.

An official spokesman said in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the assassination "constitutes a major catastrophe to Lebanon and the Arab World and is bound to have its adverse consequences on the whole region."

"Jordan, which joined the Arabs and the world's optimism at the election of President Muawwad, hoping that this would begin to return Lebanon to normal, sees that this murder is aimed at the unity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon, and it comes as an attempt to defeat the latest efforts made to help the Lebanese people and their problems," the spokesman said.

Jordan, the spokesman said, "shares with the Lebanese people and the bereaved Muawwad family their sadness, and appeals to all factions and parties in Lebanon to display utmost restraint and solidarity so as to foil all conspiracies by hostile forces aiming to destroy what may be the last chance for a settlement in Lebanon."

The spokesman expressed hope that "the crime would not discourage efforts to establish a settlement in Lebanon" and Arab League endeavours to bring peace to that country.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, in a statement carried by Petra, also expressed sorrow over the killing of Muawwad which he described as "a massive setback for hopes for peace, stability and development in Lebanon after the Taif agreement" sponsored by the Arab League.

The prime minister expressed hope that "the Lebanese people will be able to overcome this setback and resume work on establishing stability and legitimacy and ending its suffering."

Arab and foreign countries also denounced the killing. Syria denounced the assassination and quickly pointed the finger of suspicion at General Michel Aoun.

Aoun, the army commander, controls Lebanon's Christian enclave and opposes the presence of Syrian troops in the country. He rejected the authority of Muawwad who was elected with Syrian backing.

"The hand of betrayal and treason has reached the martyr President Rene Muawwad," the official Syrian news agency SANA said.

U.S. President George Bush denounced as "disgraceful, terrorist" the killing and pledged continued U.S. assistance for efforts to end Lebanon's 14-year civil war.

"It is a disgraceful performance and is condemned by the United States of America," Bush said. "However, we must not let this brutal killing stand in the way of trying to bring peace to the troubled corner of the world. I would like to offer the help of America... to bring these killers to justice."

France expressed horror at the assassination and appealed for unity to assure peace in the country it once ruled.

"I wish to express the shock of the French government in the face of this horrible assassination and convey its condolences to all Lebanese people," Junior Foreign Minister Edwige Avice said in a statement to parliament.

Algeria, a key mediator in Lebanon, condemned the killing and urged parliament to elect a successor quickly.

New 40-member Senate appointed

AMMAN (J.T.) — Three Royal Decrees issued Wednesday evening, dissolved the 30-member Upper House of Parliament (Senate); named a new 40-member Senate, including a woman; and reappointed Ahmad Lawzi as speaker.

Laila Sharaf, a former information minister, was named by the Royal Decree as Senate member in the 16th Upper House of Parliament, making her the first woman to enter the legislative authority in the history of Jordan.

The new Senate is made up of 40 members in accordance with the Constitution which stipulates that the number of Senate members should constitute half the number of Lower House members. The strength of the Lower House was raised to 80 from 60 in accordance with the 1986 Election Law and its amendments earlier this year.

With the Royal Decrees issued Wednesday, the stage is set for the new Parliament to meet Nov. 27. The King will open the parliament session with a traditional speech from the throne, following with both houses will hold separate sessions and elect their respective officials and committees.

Parliament officials confirmed that Senate members constitutionally can also serve as Cabinet members but not as any other government officials.

Following are the names of the Senate members:

1. Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker — (current prime minister);
2. Bahjat Talhouni — (serving senator);
3. Ahmad Lawzi — (speaker);
4. Ahmad Obeidat (former prime minister);
5. Akef Al Fayez (former speaker of the Lower House);
6. Bashir Al Sabbagh — (former minister);
7. Sabhi Amin Amer — (former minister);
8. Khalil Al Salem — (former governor of Central Bank of Jordan);
9. Akram Zuaitar — (serving senator);
10. Hafez Al Majali — (retired commander-in-chief of the armed forces);
11. Amer Khammash — (advisor to His Majesty King Hussein);
12. Muhammad Rassoul Al Keilani — (former ambassador);
13. Jaafar Al Shami — (former minister);
14. Omar Al Nabulsi — (former minister);
15. Ishaq Al Farhan — (former minister);
16. Salem Masa'adeh — (minister);
17. Kamel Al Sharif — (former minister);
18. Marwan Al Qasem — (minister);
19. Sa'id Al Tal — (former minister);
20. Laila Sharaf — (former minister);
21. Ibrahim Izzedine — (minister);
22. Muhammad Oudeh Al Qaran;
23. Juma Hammad — (senator);
24. Barjas Al Hadi;
25. Mohammad Kamal — (former ambassador);
26. Mohammad Ali Bdeir — (in-

27. Hamad Al Farhan — (businessman);
28. Nawaf Saud Al Qadi;
29. Najib Al Rashdan — (head of the court of appeals);
30. Khalid Al Tarawneh — (chief of the Civil Defence Department);
31. Tareq Allaeddine — (chief of the General Intelligence Department);
32. Daoud Hannania — (head of the National Medical Institution);
33. Kamal Al Shaer;
34. Amin Shuqair — (union leader);
35. Husni Ayesh — (intellectual and human rights campaigner);
36. Khalaf Abu Nuwar;
37. Ahmad Saud Al Udwan — (tribal chief);
38. Ibrahim Tabei Al Dine — (president of chamber of commerce in Zarqa);
39. Ali Abu Nuwar — (former ambassador);
40. Nazir Rashed — (former ambassador).

Article 64 of the Constitution stipulates that members of the Senate have to be 40 years old or older and should have held one of the following positions:

Prime minister, current and former minister, former ambassador and extra-ordinary ambassador, speaker at the Lower House of the Parliament, judge, retired lieutenant general and above, Parliament member who have been elected a minimum to two times and other personalities who have gained the trust of the people and have served the nation.

14 deputies-elect join forces in new 'Democratic Bloc'

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A coalition of 14 newly-elected Parliament members has been formally named the "Democratic Bloc" crowning a series of talks aimed at consolidating efforts and decisions based on common ideologies, according to newly elected press spokesman of the bloc, Deputy-elect Fakhri Kaware.

The members of the bloc, according to Kaware, include deputies-elect Issa Midanat, Mansour Seifeddine Murad, Mohammad Al Tarawneh, Awni Al Bashier, Ibrahim Al Ghabashbeh, Bassam Haddadin, Husni Al Shuyab, Salim Al Za'bi, Deeb Marji, Abdul Karim Al Dughmi, Abdul Salam Freihat, Faris Nabulsi and Kaware as well as Hussein Mujalli. The decision to form this bloc was reached Tuesday night at the end of a meeting held at Mujalli's home.

The bloc discussed "the common denominators which could serve as a minimum level of agreement among the bloc's members," Kaware told the Jordan Times. He said these common denominators "were enough to consider the attendees members of a distinct parliamentary bloc."

The bloc also assigned several of its members to "contact candidates for the speakership of the Lower House of Parliament to become acquainted

with their programmes and the possibility of reaching common grounds with any one of them," Kaware said.

The bloc has not yet made a decision on whom it will support in the race for speakership, and Kaware did not rule out the possibility of nominating a candidate from the bloc's members. "Until now we do not have a representative candidate from within the bloc and we have not decided to support any of the running candidates either," Kaware said.

Sources close to the bloc, however, maintained that Mujalli has expressed interest in running for the speakership office but has not been able to secure the support of the bloc. Kaware declined making direct comment on Mujalli's nomination maintaining that "there are several things to consider in this race and this is one of them."

In a new development Wednesday, Thougan Hindawi, until now strongly rumoured to be in the race for the speakership, denied these reports and said: "I will not participate in this war for speakership because I am not personally convinced with the idea."

He confirmed that his possible nomination was discussed among himself and other Parliament members but maintained that he was "never a candidate for this position."

Hindawi said he would support the "candidate of the majority and of an organised grouping and since the Muslim Brotherhood seems to enjoy the majority of votes so far I personally support this in principle." But he stressed that this decision "does not at all mean that I will support the demands of the Islamic movement in Parliament."

He said he would work within the public interest and the constitution. "I am the independent candidate of the people and will continue to work within this frame," Hindawi said.

Sulaiman Arar confirmed that he was still in the race for the speakership office and said contacts with other parliamentarians indicate that his "chances in winning are excellent."

Arar declined giving an exact number of votes he had secured but said that the number of parliamentarians who have promised him their votes "would ensure my success from the first round."

But he pointed out that "one cannot be totally sure because people say something and no one knows whether they will stick to it or not."

Also running for the speakership office are Laith Shbeilat, who has just returned from Omra, and Dr. Youssif Mbeideen, the declared candidate of the Muslim Brotherhood. Neither was available for comment Wednesday.

Dubcek urges party to quit

PRAGUE (R) — Czechoslovakia's reformist leader Alexander Dubcek, ousted by a Warsaw Pact invasion 21 years ago, Wednesday urged the country's beleaguered Communist leaders to resign.

In a statement read out to thousands of protesters who ignored fears of a government crackdown to jam central Prague's Wenceslas Square for the sixth consecutive day, Dubcek, 67, said he would come and meet them in the square.

Earlier more than 200,000 demonstrators had heard calls for a

general strike next week to hasten the end of Communist rule.

In East Germany, the embattled leadership proposed round-table talks with opposition groups, a move that in neighbouring Poland led to last June's partly-free elections and the crushing defeat of the Communists.

Similar negotiations in Hungary have produced the promise of completely free elections next year.

As the storm of glasnost swept through East Europe, only Romania's autocratic leader

Nicolae Ceausescu still set his face firmly against change, and even he appeared to be feeling his isolation, looking outside the continent to offer closer ties with hardline Cuba and China.

Demonstrators in Prague taunted their unpopular leader Milos Jakes with chants of "Milos — it's over."

Police did not intervene, but Jakes warned in a television address Tuesday night that the socialist policies of the country must be preserved and there were "boundaries which should not be overstepped."

Aziz leaves

AMMAN (J.T.) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz Wednesday wound up a two-day visit to Jordan and left for home after delivering a message from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to His Majesty King Hussein on the outcome of the latest United Nations bid to revive peace talks between Iran and Iraq.

Aziz said in a departure statement that his talks in Amman also covered regional and international issues of common interest.

"I heard King Hussein's analysis and remarks on various topics and I will convey to the Iraqi president the King's views," Aziz said in the statement, carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra. During the visit, Aziz said, he also held in-depth talks with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to follow up discussions on various issues and held a working session with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem on matters related to the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC).

Palestinian killed, four wounded in violent clashes

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Unknown assailants stabbed to death a 70-year-old Palestinian suspected of assisting the Israeli authorities, and Israeli soldiers shot and wounded at least four Gazans in clashes Wednesday, Arab reports said.

Muhammed Mustafa Nazal was killed in the occupied West Bank town of Jenin by four masked men, Palestinian journalists said. They said Nazal was suspected of being a pro-Israeli collaborator and also carried an Israeli-licensed weapon. There were no details as to the type of weapon.

He was the 148th Palestinian killed by fellow Arabs during the 23-month uprising. Most were suspected collaborators, but some were killed for "moral offences" such as prostitution.

At least 615 Palestinians have died of Israeli gunfire in the revolt, and 42 Israelis also have been killed.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, meanwhile, Israeli soldiers shot

and wounded at least four Palestinians in stone-throwing clashes in the Shati refugee camp, hospital officials said.

The confrontations came as businesses and transportation in the occupied territories were paralysed by a general strike ordered by the Muslim fundamentalist movement Hamas.

Hamas said the strike was in solidarity with Palestinians jailed by the Israeli authorities. The group's elderly leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, and some 200 members are currently in jail awaiting trial on charges that include murder, assistance in the killing of two Israeli soldiers and other offences.

According to army figures, some 9,101 Palestinians were jailed as of Nov. 14, of them 1,735 held in "administrative detention," a procedure allowing imprisonment for up to one year without trial.

On Tuesday, dozens of Israelis shouting "death to the Arabs" burned tyres and set up road-

blocks in their Jerusalem neighbourhood Tuesday, accusing an Arab driver of intentionally running over a seven-year-old girl.

Police said there was no proof the driver of a municipality garbage truck killed Mirav Yisraeli of nationalist motives.

The uprising erupted in the Gaza Strip's Jabalya refugee camp in December 1987 when rumours spread that an army truck intentionally collided with an Arab vehicle, killing four Gazans.

The army denied the charges, but the uprising spread to towns and villages throughout the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Police and firefighters Tuesday extinguished the burning tyres on Jerusalem street where the road accident occurred.

Police said the driver had been arrested and was being investigated.

"Certainly no possibility has been raised that the driver did this on a nationalist background," he said.

Shamir cries foul after Paristalks

PARIS (Agencies) — France's Middle East policy is both pro-Palestinian and pro-Arab, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir complained Wednesday as he wound up an official visit to Paris.

His remarks came after France voiced open scepticism on Tuesday about Israel's proposals which reject any role for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and rule out a future Palestinian state.

"The president, (Francois Mitterrand), believes that French interests dictate a pro-Palestinian and pro-Arab position, which we oppose," Shamir told reporters. "On the other hand the president expresses his sympathy for the Israeli people. How these two ideas go together is the president's business, not ours," he said.

Shamir tried to convince Mitterrand of the logic of Israel's proposals, but failed to do so, according to officials at the presidential palace Tuesday.

Shamir arrived in Paris for a two-day visit en route home from the United States. He also was to meet three European Community (EC) foreign ministers, Premier Michel Rocard and Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac, principal leader of the conservative opposition.

In Washington, the Israeli prime minister reviewed with U.S. officials the plan by Secretary of State James Baker for preliminary Israeli-Palestinian talks on Israel's proposal for elec-

tions in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip leading to autonomy.

Israel has accepted the Baker plan, but has asked the United States for assurance that the PLO will be excluded from the talks and that they be limited to the Israeli election plan.

PLO sources in Tunis said the PLO also had accepted the plan, with the proviso that the PLO control the makeup of the Palestinian delegation.

Officials at the Elysee Palace said Mitterrand and Shamir were not at all on the same wavelength. France and the rest of the European Community favour an international conference on the Middle East involving the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and all parties concerned with the Mideast conflict.

In the absence of any move towards such a conference, the Europeans generally support the Baker plan.

The officials said Mitterrand told Shamir that if nothing was done to resolve the Palestinian problem, there was no reason to suppose that the Arab countries would accept his logic.

Shamir's complaints Wednesday underlined Israeli concern about the direction of French policy since his visit to Paris in February.

Last May Mitterrand officially received PLO leader Yasser Arafat for the first time.

Arafat said to urge aggressive U.S. stand

CAIRO (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat urged U.S. President George Bush to adopt "a more aggressive attitude" towards Israel and criticised the Israeli proposal for elections in the occupied territories, Israeli Radio reported Wednesday.

But the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman did not rule out talks between Israel and Palestinians "under the right conditions" in a message sent to Bush in Washington, the radio said.

Israel Radio did not say how it obtained a copy of the message, which it noted was marked "classified."

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Tuesday that Bush got a message from Arafat "in the last couple of days," but he refused to divulge its contents. "It was a private message and was sent orally in order to keep it private," Fitzwater added.

In the message, Israel Radio reported, Arafat said an increasing number of Palestinians believe that Israel is not seriously searching for a political solution.

"This is creating an atmosphere that rouses the radicals against the moderates, and it makes it difficult for us to keep up the hopes of our people. Patience is waning," the PLO leader was quoted as saying.

"The Palestinian nation believes the United States' obligation to Israel's security should not prevent it from acting with a balanced policy that takes into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian nation and the needs of both sides of the conflict," Arafat reportedly said.

"A more aggressive attitude by the U.S. towards Israel would raise our hopes and convince the Palestinians to continue to nourish positive positions all the while goading Israel to adopt a reasonable stance that will allow us to take the first steps in the process," the radio quoted Arafat as saying.

In the message, Arafat said Israel's designs for holding elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip were aimed at establishing a body that replaces the PLO, the radio reported.

"Understandably, our people in the occupied territories are aware of this Israeli tactic and will foil every Israeli attempt to achieve this goal," Arafat was quoted as saying.

Israel's foreign ministry refused to react to the message or speculate how it was leaked to Israeli Radio.

Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, however, blamed the PLO for delaying an Egyptian response to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's proposal for Israeli-Palestinian talks to be held in Cairo on Israel's election plan.

Eritrean talks make progress, accord likely

NAIROBI (R) — Talks on ending 28 years of war in Eritrea are making progress and the Ethiopian government could agree with rebels by the end of the week to call a full-scale peace conference.

"Things are moving favourably and I would hope everything is wrapped up by the end of the week, if not earlier," a source close to the talks told Reuters Wednesday.

He spoke as delegations from Ethiopian government and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) rebels met for a third straight day in Kenya's capital Nairobi to iron out procedural issues hampering full peace negotiations.

Carrie Harmon, spokeswoman for former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who is chairing the talks, told reporters the parties had met for five-and-a-half hours Tuesday in an atmosphere "constructive and conducive to negotiations."

She declined to give details but added that Carter had held separate meetings with each side to try to speed up the talks, their second since the delegations first met in Atlanta, Georgia, in September.

The negotiators are wrangling over appointing an African co-chairman to assist Carter, international observers and a secretariat for the talks.

Hundreds of thousands of people have died in the war in Eritrea, Africa's longest-running conflict which has also forced 800,000 people into exile.

The EPLF wants the province, a former Italian colony along the Red Sea, Ethiopia's main outlet to the outside world, to become an independent state. Ethiopia has given its limited autonomy.

Another northern rebel movement, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), is pressing southwards towards the capital Addis Ababa and claiming a series of military victories.

The TPLF, fighting since 1975 to overthrow President Mengistu Haile Mariam, held separate preliminary peace talks with the government in Rome earlier this

month. Mengistu, who offered unconditional talks to the rebels shortly after he was nearly toppled in May by military commanders demanding an end to the northern wars, Wednesday promoted his chief negotiator with the insurgents.

Cabinet reshuffle

In a cabinet reshuffle, he made Ashagne Yigletu deputy prime minister in charge of social affairs.

Ashagne had been head of the Foreign Relations Department of the ruling Workers' Party of Ethiopia.

The reshuffle was announced as Ashagne was holding a second round of preliminary peace talks with the EPLF.

Mengistu also named Yilma Kassaye, a previously unknown figure, to head the government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, which supervises famine relief in the drought-hit north.

The post had been vacant since previous incumbent Colonel Berhannu Jembere was transferred back to active military service in August.

Mengistu appointed Tekola Dejen finance minister to replace Wolle Chekol, who was promoted to deputy prime minister with responsibility for economic affairs in an earlier reshuffle on Nov. 7.

Tekola was formerly minister of coffee and tea development and spearheaded a government effort to produce and market coffee, Ethiopia's main export.

The new minister of coffee and tea development is Hambissa Wakoya, former vice-minister for development of state farms.

Mengistu did not name a new prime minister to replace his old comrade-in-arms Fikre Selassie Woldemariam, who was dismissed on Nov. 7.

Ethiopia now has four deputy prime ministers and government

officials say one of them, Haile Yemenu, has been acting prime minister since Fikre Selassie was dropped.

Fikre Selassie, a former air force captain and key figure in the 1974 revolution that overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie, was officially relieved of his duties for health reasons.

But diplomats said he was suspected of sympathising with a coup attempt against Mengistu in May and of allegedly trying to smuggle gold out of the country.

The cabinet reshuffle was the fourth since the coup attempt by military commanders.

4 million need emergency food

Meanwhile a senior United Nations official said Wednesday four million people in drought-ravaged northern Ethiopia would need emergency food aid next year, twice the number previously thought.

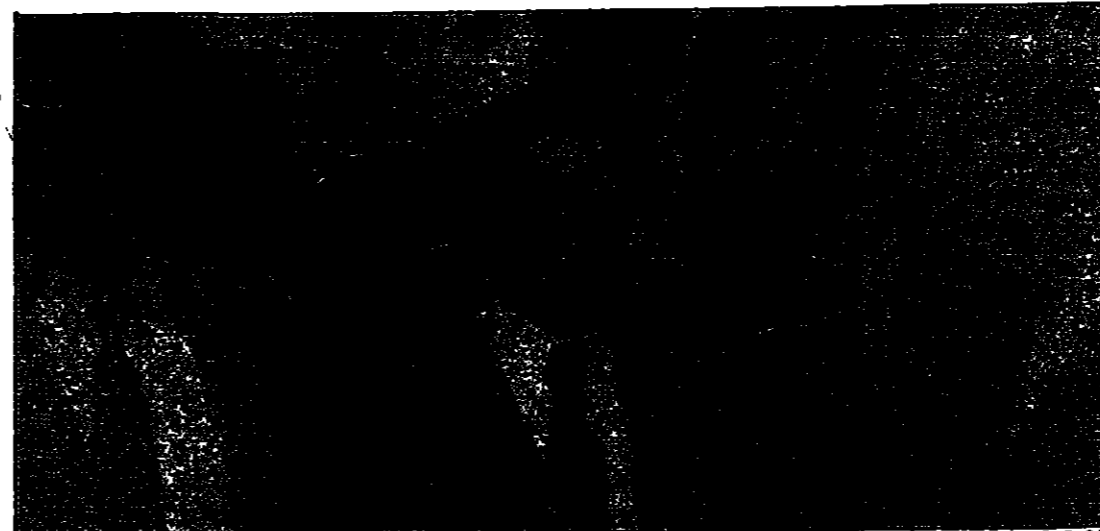
"Unless adequate and urgent preparations to meet the emergency are made by the international donor community, the prospect of a repeat of the 1984 situation in which over a million people perished due to famine is very real," David Morton, of the World Food Programme (WFP), told Reuters.

Morton said this year's drought in the northern province of Eritrea is also affecting the adjacent provinces of Tigray and Wollo more severely than previously forecast.

Last month, the WFP appealed for 242,000 tonnes of food aid for Eritrea and Tigray next year saying more than 1.7 million people there faced starvation after failure of their crops.

On Wednesday, Morton said the latest satellite pictures indicated that up to two million people in Tigray and Wollo and another two million in Eritrea would need at least 500,000 tonnes of emergency food aid.

Eritrea and Tigray have both been racked by prolonged civil wars and since August Wollo has been the scene of heavy fighting between government troops and rebels.



Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter shares a joke with heads of the Ethiopian (Aschagari Yigletu, centre) and EPLF (Amha Mohammed Sayyed, left) teams at peace talks in Nairobi, Kenya.

Turkey demands compensation for downing of plane by Syrian MiGs

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey demanded \$14.6 million from Syria in compensation for the downing of a Turkish civilian aircraft by Syrian warplanes last month, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Wednesday.

Two Syrian MiG-21 jets shot down a Turkish survey plane about 13 miles inside Turkish territory on Oct. 21. All five crew members were killed.

The spokesman, Murat Sancar, said Turkey informed the Syrian authorities about the issue last week and also raised it during the talks with the Syrian Deputy

Foreign Minister Yusuf Shakkur, who paid an official visit here this week.

Shakkur said Syria would respond to Turkey's compensation request after concluding its own investigation over the matter, Sancar told reporters during a weekly news conference.

Sancar said Turkey also accepted a Syrian request to conduct an investigation at the site of the incident in the south eastern Hatay province in the coming days. "But, we expect Syria to finish its investigation without delay and meet our compensation

request soon," he added.

Syria has offered its condolences to the Turkish government over the incident.

Sancar said several bilateral issues were also discussed during Shakkur's stay here, which was in preparation for a visit by the Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa early next year.

Syria has expressed concern that Turkey could cut off or reduce the flow of waters of the Euphrates River, a vital resource in the arid region, with the building of a chain of dams and hydroelectric power plants.

Algerian ruling party seeks to avoid fate of East Europe

ALGIERS (R) — Faced with daunting pressure for change after 27 years in power, Algeria's ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) is seeking to avoid the fate of Communist parties in Poland and East Germany.

The front is setting the pace itself with sweeping internal reforms to be debated at a key party congress next week.

At stake is the future of the party that after unchallenged power must now face free elections next year, party officials say.

Reformists also hope that debate on a thorough overhaul of the party structure will lead to a purge of officials tainted with corruption.

"Let those who enriched themselves on the backs of the FLN go away and spend their money," one reformer told the liberal weekly *Algérie Actualité*. "Let them quit the FLN, they have

already dirtied it enough."

President Chadli Benjedid, also FLN president, seeks solid backing for ambitious reforms he launched last year to liberalise the economy and create a multi-party democracy.

He also wants the FLN to open up to the young and shake out a stagnant party apparatus no longer responsive to the public.

Algerians under 30 years of age form more than 60 per cent of the population but account for only 10 per cent of FLN membership.

Conservatives want to keep an elitist party with conditions for membership.

Pre-congress meetings this week revealed widespread resistance from party hardliners to key elements of Benjedid's reforms.

"Political, economic and social reforms remain confronted with fixed positions that prejudice the necessary renovation of our front," the FLN weekly *Revolu-*

tion Africaine said in its current issue.

Shaken by riots in October 1988, when angry youths roamed the streets smashing FLN offices, the party reluctantly backed a new constitution that introduced multi-party politics last February.

Unlike Communist parties in Poland and East Germany, recently forced to share power by grass-roots protest, the nationalist FLN still runs the government and the official Uqta labour union.

But newly legal opposition parties, especially Communists and Islamic fundamentalists, are gaining fast and scores of wildcat strikes challenge the Uqta leadership.

Abdasslem Belaid, a leading hardliner, has called the Nov. 28-30 congress the FLN's last chance to remain the country's leading party.

Iraq launches space programme

LONDON — Underlining its determination to assure its place as a major Middle Eastern power, Iraq is moving to acquire a space satellite, possibly for launch by a Chinese rocket.

Brazil, which has a relatively sophisticated aerospace sector, is set to play a central role in Iraq's plans. Baghdad's Scientific Research Centre (SRC) and Brazil's space agency, Instituto de Pesquisas Espaciais (INPE) have been discussing a satellite deal for some time, in which the main contractor would be the Orbita Systems Company. Orbita is a joint venture of several Brazilian arms and aerospace companies, notably Embraer and Engesa Engenharia Especializados (Engesa).

The proposed contract is

thought to involve a satellite similar to INPE's SCD1 model, which would be equipped with a French-built high resolution camera capable of taking infrared pictures. The deal would also involve the supply of a range of associated technology, including a laboratory where Iraq could build and test its own satellites. The package would cost Baghdad about \$50 million.

Negotiations are now thought to be at an advanced stage, although the latest known development was a visit to Brazil by an SRC team in late May. The delegation left Brazil on June 2 to visit France to discuss the provisions of the satellite's camera.

It is unclear how the satellite will be launched, but one option will be to use a Chinese rocket,

under a contract with a new Brazilian-Chinese company, International Satellite Communication Ltd (Inscum), which specialises in satellite launching and tracking.

Formed in February this year and registered in Liechtenstein, Inscum is a joint venture between the China Great Wall Industrial Corporation (CGWIC) and the Brazilian armaments and missile company Avibras Aerospacial.

In Washington, officials are alarmed at the spread of spy satellites to Third World and other nations. Iraq, however, would assert that it has no less right to satellites than the countries which already possess them, and not least Israel, whose first satellite, Ofek-1, was launched last year. — CAABU Bulletin.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

Turkey denies beating Iranians

ANKARA (R) — Turkey denied Wednesday its police beat Iranian students on suspicion they were involved in a car bombing which maimed a Saudi diplomat. The Iranian News Agency (IRNA) quoted Tehran's Jomhuri Eslami newspaper Tuesday as saying three students were beaten and an unspecified number detained. "We completely deny such reports," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Murat Sancar told reporters. Turkish newspapers had reported police raids on hostels to question students after a bomb exploded in the car of Saudi Arabian diplomat Abdurrahman Shurewi in Ankara on Oct. 16, blowing off both his legs. An anonymous caller to a Western news agency in Cyprus claimed responsibility on behalf of the Lebanese-based pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad group, saying the attack was to avenge the execution of 16 convicted Kuwaiti Shi'ite bombers in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in September.

Tunisian students boycott classes

TUNIS (R) — University students in the south Tunisian city of Sfax are boycotting classes in protest at an outbreak of food poisoning at the campus cafeteria, university officials said Wednesday. They said 37 students were hospitalised after having a dinner in the cafeteria Tuesday last week. The officials denied a Tunis newspaper report that 290 students needed hospital treatment. The boycott began the day after the incident, they added. On Tuesday the university's disciplinary council expelled four students for holding unauthorised meetings, inciting fellow students to strike and using abusive language against university staff, the officials said. The students, two from the medical faculty and two from the science faculty, were said to be members of the pro-Islamic Tunisian General Students' Union.

3 Sudanese policemen killed

KHARTOUM (R) — Three Sudanese policemen were killed in a rebel ambush in south west Sudan, an Interior Ministry statement said Tuesday. The official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) quoted the statement as saying the three men were travelling in a vehicle Sunday when they hit a landmine. Rebels later opened fire on them, it added. The incident took place near the town of Kadigbi in south Kordofan province where guerrillas of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have recently intensified their activities. The SPLA has fought government troops since 1983 in the mainly animist or Christian south and adjacent territories in a bid to end what it views as an unjust domination of the country by its Arabised Muslim majority. The two sides are scheduled to begin a fresh round of direct peace talks in Nairobi on Dec. 1.

Israeli officer removed after suicide

TEL AVIV (AP) — An officer in an elite combat unit was relieved of his command and five soldiers were removed from the unit following the suicide of a 20-year-old soldier, the army has said. Saturday's suicide of Eli Shahar, a Givati Brigade sergeant, was reportedly triggered by a hazing from fellow soldiers. Maj. Gen. Matan Vilnai, head of the army's southern command that has jurisdiction over the elite brigade, decided the five soldiers "are no longer worthy of serving in the Givati Brigade," the army said in a statement. It said Vilnai made the decision after personally interrogating Shahar's commanders and receiving a detailed investigative report on the case from the Givati commander, who was not named in keeping with army rules. The decision was approved by the army's Chief of Staff, Lt.-Gen. Dan Shomron, the army said.

Turkey elects parliament speaker

ANKARA (AP) — Former Deputy Premier Kaya Erdem, one of the founders of the governing Motherland Party, was elected speaker of parliament Tuesday, 61, who was deputy premier in the government of President Turgut Ozal, got 270 votes in the 450-seat legislature to defeat Metin Emiroglu, also of the Motherland Party, who got 94. A number of the deputies either did not vote or cast empty ballots, but parliament sources say Erdem's election indicated he had to have collected some opposition party votes. Erdem, who helped found the Motherland Party along with Ozal, served as finance minister when Ozal was deputy premier in charge of the economy in the 1980-83 military government. Together, they launched the export-oriented, free-market economic policies that rescued Turkey from a foreign debt crisis when it was bordering on bankruptcy. The speaker's job was vacated when the previous speaker, Yildirim Akbulut, was named to form a new government by Ozal, who was elected president by parliament on Oct. 31 after serving as premier for six years.

Kabul extends state of emergency

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghanistan's President Najibullah has extended a state of emergency for six months to combat what he called a continuing foreign intervention. A presidential decree issued in the Afghan capital Kabul said the intervention by Pakistan and its supporters had become severe recently and that fresh arms had been supplied to Afghan rebels, Kabul Radio said. The emergency, which has been in force since February, had been extended "to stop foreign intervention, defend our beloved homeland and maintain peace," the decree said. Pakistan hosts an estimated three million Afghan war refugees and the main Western-backed guerrilla groups but denies giving them military aid. The Kabul broadcast, monitored in Islamabad, quoted the decree as saying the rebels were being encouraged to mount military and economic pressure on the government, citing their efforts to block highways ahead of winter. Najibullah first proclaimed the state of emergency on Feb. 18 after the last of more than 100,000 Soviet troops pulled out of Afghanistan under U.N.-brokered Geneva accords.

North Yemeni leader confirms plans for union with S. Yemen

KUWAIT (AP) — North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was quoted Wednesday as confirming moves for the union of his state with South Yemen.

Saleh who will confer with South Yemeni President Heidal Al Attas in the southern capital of Aden on Nov. 20, said the two will announce the setting up of the "Republic of Yemen."

The declaration would be "an advanced step toward merging the two countries in a completely united entity," he was quoted as adding in an interview with the Kuwait daily *Al Rai Al Aam*.

Following the declaration, the two countries were likely to unify the handling of defence and foreign affairs, Saleh said.

State-run newspapers in North Yemen reported earlier the Republic of Yemen would be a confederation of the two Arab states that control the strategic Bab Al Mandab Strait, the narrow entrance to the Red Sea.

The move would make North Yemen a bridge linking its partners in the Arab Cooperation Council, Egypt, Jordan and Iraq, with the Arab World's only self-

confessed Marxist state.

The 10-month-old ACC is primarily an economic union. South Yemeni officials have said they would consider joining also when their union with North Yemen is completed.

Saleh told *Al Rai Al Aam* that in the envisaged Republic of Yemen the two countries will initially maintain their own existing internal policies and political structures — the Marxist Socialist Party in the South and the General People's Congress in the North.

"Our political structure will benefit from the world's positive experiments, both from the East and the West, excluding of course those negative aspects which run counter to our Islamic creed," he said.

Nov. 30 is the anniversary of South Yemen's independence from British colonial rule in 1967. A Marxist government gained control shortly after independence and forged close military and economic links with the Soviet Union.

Neighbouring oil-rich Arab states like Saudi Arabia have

been trying to bring about the union of the two Yemens for years, despite the differences in their political systems.

These efforts were snarled with the outbreak of a fierce 12-day civil war in January 1986 between rival wings of Aden's Socialist Party when the deposed President Ali Nasser Mohammad sought refuge in the North with some 40,000 of his followers.

Saleh dismissed Mohammad's presence in the North as an obstacle to unity. "This question poses no problem in the light of the unitary action," he was quoted as saying.

As part of its effort to encourage the merger Saudi Arabia has provided South Yemen with 200 million riyals (\$53 million) loans and grants for various development projects.

The flow of aid began after Attas visited Saudi Arabia soon after taking over from the deposed Mohammad in 1986. He was campaigned widely since then to assure the Arab states that he wanted to improve relations with them and eventually seek union with North Yemen.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Programme review
15:45 Children programme
16:00 Book of Adventure
16:15 News for the Deaf
16:30 Religious programme
16:45 Health programme
16:55 Programme review
17:00 News in Arabic
17:15 Local series
17:30 Programme review
17:45 Local programme
18:00 Arabic film
18:15 News in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Le Monde est a vous
17:45 News in French
17:55 Actualite du jour
18:00 News in Hebrew
18:15 Varieties
18:30 News in Arabic
18:45 Curious Record
18:55 Bit of Prey
19:05 News in English
19:15 Feature film: "The Revenge of Al Capone"

PRAYER TIMES

06:45 Fajr
06:55 Sunrise
11:22 Dhuhur
14:13 Asr
16:38 Maghrib
17:53 Isha

CHURCHES

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 623785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624996

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Fernandina Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543

Assumption Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Assumption Orthodox Church Tel. 772261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Assumption International Church Tel. 827981, 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811285

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 64932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Gradual rise in temperatures will occur and winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./max. temp. 6/22

Amman 11/28

Aqaba 11/28

Deserts 4/25

Jordan Valley 12/26

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 21, Aqaba 27. Humidity readings: Amman 36 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Joseph Ismail 770560

Dr. Musa Bashir 615487

Dr. Saleh Zayed 790777

Dr. Salwan Al Dabbas 770751

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Neitrokh pharmacy 630772

Al Salan pharmacy 636730

Yaacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeissan pharmacy 637660

EMERGENCIES

Dr. Kamal Al Najjar (—)

Al Sharaa's pharmacy (983238)

ZARQA: Dr. Izzuddin Abdul Salwan (—)

Khalidh pharmacy (983417)

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Rescue 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 771211

Highway Police 864302

Traffic Police 866390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 635800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 891467

Complaints 891467

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 636140

Repairs 623101

Abdell Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queens Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/6

Aldhah Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/6

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Agricultural engineers federation opens meeting in Amman

Food security a must — premier

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Wednesday emphasised Jordan's keenness on pursuing efforts that can help ensure food security for the Arab World and increase food production.

"Arab countries should direct investments to agricultural projects in order to ensure sufficient food supplies and to increase their capabilities in competing with foreign products in domestic and international markets," the prime minister said at a meeting with heads of delegations taking part in a conference of the Arab Agricultural Engineers Federation (AAEF) which opened in Amman Wednesday.

After a briefing on the progress of the meeting, which is focusing attention on coordinating agricultural policies in the Arab region and on marketing issues, the prime minister said that due attention must be given to the

development of natural resources if the Arab World is to attain self-sufficiency.

Sharif Zeid urged the participants of the conference to follow up the implementation of its resolutions and recommendations by all possible means.

The Damascus-based federation was established in 1968 by Jordan and four other Arab countries. The current 18th biennial meeting was formally opened earlier in the day by Agriculture Minister Bassam Al Saket.

The Arab World currently faces a serious food shortage problem because of its incapability to grow cereals and other crops, mainly wheat, as well as

shortages in meat and dairy products, Saket said in an opening speech.

The Arab World imported food commodities worth \$2.4 billion annually in the 1970s, rising to \$13.4 billion in the 1980s, according to Saket. "This proves that the Arabs are becoming more and more dependent on foreign sources for food supplies, which include bread, sugar, vegetable oil, meat and dairy products. This is a very serious situation endangering the Arab countries' position and posing a threat no less dangerous than a military confrontation with an external power," Saket warned.

The minister underlined the need to achieve integration in food production policies within the Arab World, with focus on the agricultural sector and means of increasing production through the employment of modern techniques.

"Unless the Arab countries adopt a coordinated and integrated policy in food production," the minister said, "there can be no chance for Jordan or any other Arab state to compete in the foreign markets."

"The Arab World," he added, "should join forces in order to confront the emerging economic blocs elsewhere in the world and should use modern technology to survive."

Saket also urged the Arab countries to offer all possible assistance to the farmers of the occupied Arab territories and to help them market their products and earn a livelihood that would boost "their steadfastness in the face of Israel's repression and continued drive to destroy the Palestinian economy."

The AAEF Chairman Yahya Bakkour in a speech to the gathering underlined the importance of the agricultural sector, which can ensure sufficient food for the Arabs and help promote social and economic development in the Arab World.

Tareq Tal, president of the Jordanian Agricultural Engineers Association, outlined the various activities carried out by the association in Jordan and its assistance to the Palestinians through a special fund.

The three-day meeting will review the federation's various programmes and will review a report on the federation's financial situation as well as preparations for the following meeting, which is scheduled to be held in Egypt.

The meeting is attended by delegates from Jordan, Kuwait, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan, North and South Yemen.



A scene from the opening ceremony Wednesday of a sports championship for the disabled. Five Arab states are participating in the event (Petra photo).

Sports for handicapped begin

AMMAN (J.T.) — Handicapped sportsmen from Jordan and four other Arab countries are taking part in a pan-Arab championship which was opened in Amman Wednesday by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid.

The handicapped will be competing in target ball for the blind and table tennis for the crippled, according to the Jordan Sports

Federation for the Handicapped (JSFH), which is organising the championship in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

Prince Ra'ad delivered a speech at the outset of the games welcoming the participants and outlining the activities of the JSFH and its programmes.

Princess Majeda, Minister of Youth and Sports and other officials as well as participants in an ESCWA conference in Amman on capabilities and needs of the disabled persons, attended the opening session and watched part of the games. The participants came from Kuwait, Bahrain, Syria and Iraq in addition to Jordan.

Call issued for effective philosophy on education

AMMAN (Petra) — Participants in an Arab training course on the concepts and technicalities of effective educational supervision have called for the adoption of a unified philosophy on educational supervision and its terminology, exchange of supervisory expertise, scientific documents and holding seminars in various fields of educational supervision.

The participants also called for convening an annual conference

Abdul Salam Majali lauded for his efforts

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Education Adnan Badran has lauded the efforts Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, His Majesty King Hussein's advisor for educational affairs, in the field of education as well as the educational projects he launched for Jordan.

Addressing a celebration held at Amman Hotel Wednesday in honour of Majali at the conclusion of his membership in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as representative of Jordan, Badran paid tribute to Majali noting that he "revealed the bright educational, scientific, and cultural image of Jordan and demonstrated its achievements in all these fields." The director of the UNESCO regional office in Amman, Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim Kazzem, delivered another speech praising the efforts Majali exerted in the field of education and culture. Majali received an appreciation certificate and an honorary medal from UNESCO and a memorial present from the Ministry of Education.

Queen today opens Irbid planting project

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Thursday will open a project of medical plants by planting saplings of thyme in the villages of Hibras and Kafir Soum. The Queen will also inspect a number of lands planted with thyme in these villages. This project is conducted by the woman and development programme of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, in cooperation with the Jordan Women's Association in Irbid Governorate.

This project is designed to get women involved in the socio-economic development process in Jordan, to train women cadres on management of productive projects and to set an example of fruitful cooperation between local and international organisations with regard to the implementation of development projects.

This project is designed to encourage women to utilise lands in their neighbourhoods.

ACC states discuss education cooperation

CAIRO (Petra) — President of universities in the four member countries of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) gathered at the city of Tanta Wednesday for a three-day meeting to discuss scopes of cooperation and the promotion of higher education in the four countries.

Addressing the opening session, Dr. Ahmad Fathi Srouf, Egyptian minister of education, stressed the cultural and intellectual unity within the Arab World. Srouf emphasised the role universities can play in promoting

culture and higher education. The Tanta meeting, he said, will discuss issues related to student admission, transfer of modern technology to the ACC states, and research work that would benefit the Arab society.

Jordan's four universities are represented at the meeting, which will also study means of promoting the exchange of expertise and attaining full coordination in higher education and scientific research among the ACC states.

Sweden launches initiative to ensure rights for disabled

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Swedish government is launching an initiative to introduce an international legal instrument to ensure that the existing conventions on human rights represent a meaningful practice for the disabled of the world, Ethel Wilkum, a Swedish government advisor on matters related to the disabled, said Wednesday.

"Through rehabilitation and provision of equal opportunities are part of the societies' obligation towards the disabled, as entailed in the universal declaration of human rights, they are not properly applied," Wilkum told a press conference.

Wilkum is attending a regional conference on the needs of the disabled which opened here earlier this week. She told the conference in a keynote address that the implementation of strategies and plans is the "crucial challenge for all of us working in this field."

The Swedish proposed international charter will be a legal framework that will help the implementation of necessary programmes in all countries both industrial and developed, Wilkum told Wednesday's press conference.

"The concrete meaning of the initiative is not to aim at a new human rights convention, but to reach an agreement on how all states shall guarantee the practical functions of already existing conventions also for the disabled," she said.

The Swedish government has already set the wheels in motion of its initiative by seeking support from other countries to endorse it as a United Nations document, Wilkum said. She added that the Amman conference provided a chance for Swedish officials to meet some of the members and do some lobbying for their initiative.

The new concept is to make societies better equipped in order to eliminate barriers caused by disability, such as making buildings and other facilities like transportation more accessible to the disabled.

But the idea is not to set up standard rules, but to make all decision makers aware of these aspects and take them into account when planning.

"These things do not cost much, but should be taken into consideration during the planning process, and I hope that developed countries will not repeat the mistakes of industrialised countries regarding this matter. That is why it is still not too late for developed countries because they still have a chance to plan," Wilkum said.

Another approach is an attempt to provide equal opportunities for both able and disabled people. "Governments should bring handicapped people into the workforce, of course, with a little bit of effort, but it is certainly worth it when they stop being a burden on their society," Sweden's Ambassador to Jordan Lars Lomback told the press conference.

In Sweden, as a result of 20 years of comprehensive and continuous work, the disabled are now fully integrated in their society. What made this arduous task possible, according to Lomback, is "the fact that disabled people had very strong organisations which paved the way for public opinion to accept them as part of the society."

"Credit is also given to the disabled themselves who were very active in explaining their situation to the public," he said.

As Wilkum put it, it was made easier by the fact that Sweden enjoys 100 per cent literacy among its individuals. "This facilitates the movement of information and the spreading of awareness was indeed sped up," she said.

Parents of the disabled too play a major role in the rehabilitation-integration process. "In Sweden, they are organised in special associations which help them to cope with their disabled children. Like their Swedish counterparts, Jordanian parents should also have similar associations to offer them advice on how to deal with disability," Wilkum said.

Another trend now prevailing in Sweden, is avoidance of institutional care and special education for disabled children. "As a complementing part of the integration process, disabled children are being sent to normal schools in an attempt to eliminate the barrier between disabled and non-disabled children," Wilkum said.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT: Agriculture Minister Bassam Al Saket held a meeting in his office Wednesday with a team representing the Arab Investment Corporation and discussed the implementation of agricultural projects in Jordan. The team is currently on a visit here to discuss the establishment of a poultry slaughter house and other projects. The corporation groups 14 Arab countries, including Jordan, and is headquartered in Sudan.

EXAMS ANNOUNCED: The Ministry of Education has announced that the first-term examinations for third secondary students will begin Dec. 4 and include typing in Arabic and English as well as practical training. The ministry asked students sitting for the third secondary examinations in the commercial, agricultural, industrial, nursing, and hotel management fields be ready for the examinations at the set time (Petra).

RCC DOCUMENTATION: A team from the Department of Libraries, Documentation, and Archives has begun to prepare a study related to establishing a cultural documentation centre at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) from which researchers and specialists can benefit. Costs of the project and the recommendations necessary for its implementation, are being studied. The project is designed to spread awareness and move hand in hand with the developments underway in various fields (Petra).

COWS, SHEEP VACCINATED: A total of 1,000 heads of cows and 200,000 heads of sheep in Jordan have been vaccinated against malaria fever, by a vaccination campaign recently launched by the Ministry of Agriculture. Although all vaccines used so far have been imported, the vaccines to be used next week will be locally produced (Petra).

EMERGENCY TEAM FOR WINTER: The Civil Defence Committee of Mafrqa Governorate Wednesday decided to form an emergency team from the local municipal councils, the Jordan Electric Power Company and the Telecommunications department in preparation for the winter season. The committee also decided to repair roads, move people living near wadis to safe areas and cooperate with the Armed Forces in dealing with emergencies (Petra).

ARCHAEOLOGY LECTURE: The Italian embassy, in cooperation with the 'Friends of Archaeology', is sponsoring a lecture entitled "Three more archaeological campaigns at Umm Al Rasas — Kastaron Mefra, 1987-1989" by Father Michele Piccirillo on Nov. 23 at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m., and Nov. 25 at the Department of Archaeology at the University of Jordan and at the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at Yarmouk University at 2:00 p.m. (J.T.)

ZARQA CIVIL DEFENCE: Civil Defence Department (CDD) Director Lieutenant General Khaled Tarawneh Wednesday inspected civil defence departments in Zarqa Governorate and was briefed on activities in the field of public safety. Tarawneh called for promoting CDD activities and cooperation with citizens (Petra).

MERBET FESTIVAL: A Jordanian delegation arrived in Baghdad Wednesday to participate in the 10th Merbet Festival due to begin Saturday. The delegation consists of 25 university professors, poets, writers, and critics. Members of Arab and foreign delegations due to participate in the festival have begun to arrive in Baghdad (Petra).

Amman ceremony marks centenary of Indian leader

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanians and members of the Indian community living in Jordan Wednesday organised a celebration marking the conclusion of celebrations on the occasion of the 100th birthday for Jawaharlal Nehru, independent India's first prime minister, and the 40th Independence Day anniversary of the sub-continent.

Leading the celebrations was Ahmad Al Lawzi, speaker of the Upper House of Parliament, who, in a speech, paid tribute to Nehru and Indo-Jordanian relations.

He praised Nehru's leadership of India's independence struggle and subsequent campaign to eliminate sectarianism in the country.

"If India is the architect of the concept of non-violence in resisting British colonialism, the intifada of the youth and children against the colonisation of Israel follows the same sound and humanitarian concept," he said. The resistance of the people of Palestine in occupied Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip to the Israeli occupation is a legitimate human right. The example set by Beit Sahour inhabitants in refusing to pay taxes to the occupation authorities is in conformity to the right of these people in civil disobedience and the continuation of their struggle to conquer the occupying power and to get their right in self-determination on their national soil."

Indian Ambassador to Jordan Gajendra Singh also addressed the audience and recalled Nehru's contributions not only to India's development but also to the international order through the role he played in setting up the Non-Aligned Movement.

"He saw the civilisation and culture of India connected as a continuous stream from Arab countries and Central Asia right up to South East Asia," the ambassador said.

Dr. Abdullah Khatib, chairman of the General Union of Voluntary Societies and president of the Jordan-India Friendship Society, also paid tribute to Nehru and his achievements in the Indian local scene as well as the Arab and international arenas. He also underlined the late Indian leader's contribution to democracy as a whole in the international scene.

The ceremony was organised by the embassy of India in cooperation with the Jordan-India Friendship Society.



Hikmat Al Khammash

Maritime company to meet in Cairo

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Hikmat Al Khammash left for Cairo Wednesday to attend a meeting of the Arab Maritime Bridge Company (AMBC) general assembly to discuss means of promoting the use of the land-sea route linking Aqaba with Nweibeh and boosting tourism.

One of the topics the delegates from Egypt, Jordan and Iraq, the three states which own the company, will tackle is how to cope with increase in travel along the route.

The AMBC, which was established in 1987, has been transporting goods, passengers and vehicles to Egypt and Jordan by a small fleet of ferry boats, commencing between Aqaba in Jordan and Nweibeh in Sinai in Egypt.

The company's activities and programmes for the coming year will be reviewed by the general assembly.

Jordan Times
667171-6

German reunification not a priority for East Berlin

By Ghadeer Taber
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Despite the turbulent changes in East Germany's political structure and the new government's announcement of its intentions to bring about far-reaching reforms, reunification with West Germany is not at this time a priority for the Soviet bloc state, according to an East German official.

"The GDR (German Democratic Republic) remains a sovereign state. Although we have opened our borders, we must take care of our internal affairs in East Germany first and in Eastern Europe before addressing the question of reunification," press secretary at the East German embassy, Ruediger Hepach, told reporters at a press briefing Wednesday.

"We recognise the principles and are working actively for the 'common European house' proposed by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, but in our view it is only possible based on the existing states of Europe and on the basis of its social orders," he said at the briefing, which was mainly aimed at explaining the East German government's position on the dramatic changes in the country in the last 10 days.

Relations between the two German states were always sensitive and essential for the stability of Europe and for peace in the continent, according to Hepach. "That is why we are interested in stable and predictable relations with West Germany," he said.

"But for the time being, our Chamber of Ministers represent our people and the majority of our people do not want reunification in my opinion," he said. None believes that reunification is possible by the end of the 1990s or the year 2000, according to the press secretary's assessment. He said that at a demonstration in the city of Leipzig Monday "only one banner demanding German reunification was raised among a crowd of 200,000."

It was the first time that the issue of reunification was raised by East German demonstrators, whose clamour for reforms brought down hardline Communist leader Erich Honecker and forced the party to form a new party structure and government.

Although most Europeans are delighted by the destruction of the Berlin Wall, there remains a mistrust and fear at the prospect of a reunified more powerful Germany.

One of the main questions posed to Hepach by the local

press during Wednesday's press briefing was whether the changes in his country heralded any shift in East Berlin's position or policy on the Middle East conflict.

Hepach replied that East Germany remained committed to supporting the rights of the Palestinian people.

"East German support for peace in the region and the rights of the Palestinians remains firm," said the press secretary, speaking in fluent Arabic.

"East Germany strongly supports a solution which gives the right of self-determination to the Palestinians and provides secure borders for Israel,"

East Germany, which, along with other Soviet bloc states except Romania, broke formal relations with Israel, seems to be interested in developing these ties. "East Germany will have relations with all the countries in the region to present our views," Hepach said.

"Through our contacts with Israel we want to remove the distorted picture of East Germany in the minds of Israelis," he added. "Diplomatic relations have not been discussed."

East Germany was one of the first European countries to recognise the State of Palestine declared by the Palestinian National Council

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

- EXHIBITIONS**
- An art exhibition by Jordanian artists Samra Bourini and Abir Abu Jaleel at Alka Art Gallery.
 - An art exhibition entitled "The Blue Rider" at the Goethe Institute.
 - A photographic exhibition entitled "Amman Today" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
 - An exhibition of paintings and etchings inspired by Arabic Islamic calligraphy at Abdal Hameed Shousan Foundation.
 - An art exhibition by artists from Jordan and other Arab countries at Al Wasiti Gallery, Plaza Hotel.
 - An exhibition by Jordanian artists Namat Al Naser and Larisa Najjar at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
 - An art exhibition by Aswar Haddadin at the Royal Cultural Centre.

BAZAAR

- A bazaar by the Egyptian Community Club at the Jerusalem Hotel.

Jordan Times

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Changing times

THE REMARKS attributed to the Soviet ambassador to Damascus and published in the Washington Post Monday to the effect that Soviet military aid to Syria is not a bottomless pit may have been distorted and quoted out of context. Still the essence of the message is loud and clear. And this should have been anticipated a long time ago starting with the advent of glasnost and perestroika in the Soviet Union. It is therefore natural to start viewing the present Soviet leadership, under the new prevailing conditions, as fundamentally different from all the previous Soviet governments that placed high priority on Arab-Soviet solidarity and cooperation in the political, economic and military fields. One has got to be naive not to discern that Moscow of "today" is no Moscow of "yesterday," and that its priorities are dramatically different from those that it had held on to over the past five decades.

As the cultivation of East-West relations and the breakdown of opposing military alliances is uppermost on the minds of all East European leaders, it is inevitable that those leaders will start exploring other avenues for developing their relations with the industrial West which counts most in these times. And given the close relations between the West and Israel, where Jewish lobbyists have successfully infiltrated all the sensitive areas of government, it becomes almost axiomatic that Moscow and the rest of East European capitals would view Tel Aviv as one of the keys that could be used to open up doors for them in the West. To cite one living example, how many times have the West and Israel attempted to use the issue of Soviet Jews' emigration as a bargaining chip with Moscow?

Accordingly, the Arab World should not be surprised that the traditional friendly relations with the Eastern Bloc are heading towards a heavy storm. That does not mean that the Arab countries should give up henceforth on Arab-Eastern European relations. On the contrary, with the growing evidence that rivalry in the international arena is shifting from political, ideological and military confrontations to economic and intellectual competitions; the Arab World has to learn to exploit the new game and apply its economic prowess as a bargaining chip to win over countries from the East and the West to its side. In other words, the Arab capitals have got to shift gears in tune with the shifting of gears between the West and the East.

Even more relevant than the recognition of the new ground rules applicable to international relations is to heed the message that is ushered in by the wind of change blowing over the entire world. The Arab countries must likewise begin the process of their own glasnost and perestroika and the sooner that process begins the more orderly it can be maintained. Viewed against this backdrop, the fact that Jordan has re-introduced parliamentary system in a lively style attests to the fact that Amman has taken the initiative in the Middle East region to accelerate the process of democratisation in this part of the world.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Wednesday tackled a visit to Jordan by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz who conveyed a message to King Hussein from the Iraqi president on Tuesday. The developments in the Gulf region and the ongoing attempts to end the hostilities between Baghdad and Tehran were the main topics in the message, the paper noted. Failure by Iran to enter into direct talks with Iraq to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 598 and reach peace in the Gulf region is the focus of Arab attention at the moment; and is a subject that ought to acquire world attention in view of the great need for a lasting settlement that would ensure no return to fighting, the paper added. Iraq ought to acquire further backing for its constructive position from the Arab countries which are concerned over the situation in the Gulf and which want to see peace prevailing in that area to safeguard the Arab Nation's highest interests, the paper noted. All peace-loving nations are also invited to contribute to the Arab effort and to persuade Iran to opt for real and lasting peace based on mutual respect, peace that can ensure the rights of all countries to stability, security and progress, the paper continued. It is time for Tehran, said the paper, to respond favourably to reason; and it is time for Tehran to enter into serious talks with its neighbour to build just peace.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Wednesday blames the Egyptian workers crisis on shortcomings by the Egyptian and Iraqi officials who, he says, failed to take proper measures to gradually lay off the workers by the end of the Iran-Iraq war and ensure their transportation to their home country. Faded Al Faneek says that it was natural for Iraq to import workers during the war so as to replace Iraqi men recruited for the fighting against Iran, but now that the war has ended, and that many troops have been discharged from service to take up the occupations filled by the Egyptian workers, it is natural that some problems would crop up. The writer says that the problem of unemployment seems now to be a common issue for the Arab World and it is not advisable for any country to try to ignore it or delay serious action, as was the case with the Egyptian workers in Iraq. It is also regrettable to see and hear governments trying to push up the affair or reflect a contrary image to what is really happening, the writer continues.

Al Dustour daily newspaper said that Tariq Aziz's visit to Amman with a message to the King from the Iraqi leader is part of the ongoing consultations between the two brotherly countries on matters of common concern. The Iraqi message, said the paper, came in the wake of a series of meetings conducted by a United Nations envoy in Baghdad and Tehran in the course of attempts to carry out a Security Council resolution to end the conflict in the Gulf. There is no doubt that consultation among Arab countries and an exchange of views on the situation in the Gulf is an essential element needed to mobilise all Arab political efforts at the regional and international levels to achieve the aspired peace, said the paper.

Starting new era with many questions

By P.V. Vivekanand

JORDAN and its people are anxiously looking forward to the convening of the newly elected Parliament on Nov. 27; most are convinced that it signals the beginning of a new leaf in the history of the Kingdom with grass-roots participation in the decision-making process while some others are sceptical as to how the new deputies will clash head on with the pressing economic and political issues facing the country. Yet a few others believe that there could be no real change in the course of the country simply because most of the fresh faces in the elected new Lower House are relatively new to legislative authority and, as such, will be treading in untested waters.

Observers in the region are still trying to figure out how Islamic Fundamentalists and "Islamists" came out with a strong showing in the Nov. 8 polls and how much actual voting power they can muster on the House floor. They expect the second question to be partially answered when the House elects its new speaker Monday, but a convincing answer to the former is still elusive. Perhaps, it is of relatively secondary importance since the major question is how Muslim Brotherhood deputies and their co-religionists use their new-found legislative clout to address some of the fundamental issues that affect the life of the country and its people. An equally important query is what posture the so-called leftists, liberals, Arab nationalists and traditionalists will assume when publicly exposed to the barrage of religious-oriented moves mooted by the fundamentalists. At the same time, one can also expect the "leftist"/"nationalist" blocs to side with the "Islamic bloc" on a case-by-case basis.

Many voters expect the so-called "Islamic bloc" in the House to try to impose social behaviour or dressing codes on the society at large. A ban on alcohol? Perhaps yes, perhaps no. But introducing a call for prohibition is far from implementing it through a Parliament resolution. Here, a funny thought comes to mind. How will those "liberals" and "moderates" in the House who also happen to be Muslim respond to the question of alcohol? Will they stand up and say there is no sense in imposing a ban if only because customs duties on imported alcoholic beverages constitute a good part of government revenues, because it will deprive many of their jobs in local alcohol producing plants, because those who want to drink will drink anyway, whether or not there is prohibition, because...., because....?

It appears almost certain that very few of the "liberals" and

"moderates" will be bold enough to speak their mind on the floor when it comes to such sensitive issues as alcohol and Islamic dress codes simply because they will be "exposing" themselves as "non-practising" Muslims if they do. No doubt, this is one element the "Islamic bloc" counts on as fast accompli as when it chooses to introduce such legislation.

What about corruption and "economic crimes"? Will the "Islamists" be able to push through legislation to bring to book those whom they consider are mostly responsible for the country's present economic woes? There is no evading the question, simply because it has been one of the major campaign slogans of many successful as well as unsuccessful aspirants to the House and many voters expect the new deputies to follow it through and seek to make good their pledges that wrenching back the alleged funds from those who allegedly pocketed them will partially resolve the Kingdom's foreign debt problems. But for a good part of the electorate it is a pipedream since, as one put it, "it will take years and years before anyone could make any sense out of the trackloads of documents. The time and money spent on it will be better spent in doing something more useful." But that should not stop deputies from letting off steam across the House floor. There will be fireworks, but little else since the government has already instituted a special committee to study "economic crimes" and legislation. For those who think the committee will also disappear with the expected resignation of the government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, it will be wise reminder that the panel includes some of the present ministers not in their personal capacity but as serving members of the cabinet. Hence, whoever succeed them automatically become members of the committee. Will the House seek to get up and run its own committee parallel to that of the executive branch? Won't it be contradictory instead of complementary?

One thing is definite. The nature of the new Parliament is such that there will be a closer monitoring of every future government decision and move. There is nothing abnormal about it since that's how most democracies work and the only additional feature here in Jordan will be that scrutineers will be using magnifying glasses; unless, of course, some of their own are in government.

The call for abolition of martial law was another slogan that figured prominently in almost every election banner that festooned Jordan's streets in the run-up to the elections. But, having been elected and given the opportunity to examine the pros and cons of martial law will create a totally different scenario for the deputies.

Some of those who screamed and shouted against martial law might change their views once being given a first-hand encounter with it from the giving end rather than the receiving end. Well, that's something worth witnessing, particularly that martial law regulations have been sparingly used for political purposes in the country, and permitting political parties to resume their life in Jordan is another paramount question.

It is a totally different kettle of fish when it comes to lifting the ban on political parties. Here is where one could safely expect real thunder and fireworks on the House floor. It is widely accepted that the absence of alternative organised groups with clearly defined political ideologies within the framework of the Jordanian Constitution contributed heavily to the success of the "Islamic bloc" in entering Parliament. So, will the so-called majority group in the House use its own strength by going along with moves to set up other similar blocs which could easily eat away at its own supporters in the electorate by the time the next elections are due? Quite simply, no. But then, how will the rest of the House take it? Are they going to sit down, resigned to the fact that the powerful "Islamic bloc" is too much of an adversary to overpower?

Over, and above all, is the question of Palestine. By all counts, one can easily expect many of the "Islamic bloc" to reaffirm their calls for a "reconsideration" of Jordan's decision to sever formal links with the occupied West Bank and even try to push the leadership to it if only for the sake of being seen as trying to accomplish what they promised.

"Demands" for the abrogation of the Kingdom's agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank also fall in the same category; simply no-go areas since those issuing those calls, by design or coincidence, have not been able to come up with viable alternatives. There may be ideas, but Jordan is in no position to launch new political or economic experiments. The stakes are too high.

In the final analysis, it will appear that the new Parliament, while assuming an unprecedented role in Jordan's life and course, will have to fall in line with the present political and economic policies of the country for one simple reason; it cannot come up with better options. By the same token, one can very well expect the projected National Charter to act as a safety-valve against extremist tendencies and in favour of moderation and clearly defined national priorities.

Peace process at crossroads

By Ephraim Sneh

WE HAVE now reached a most critical time for the peace process. The role of the U.S. in the present stage of the process has virtually come to an end. The role played by the U.S. and Egypt was to bring the opening positions of the Israelis and the Palestinians to a point where the gap between the two became bridgeable. It seems that this role has been successfully accomplished.

The 10 points of President Mubarak include nothing unacceptable to the Israeli national consensus. One must remember that those points are supposed to be the Palestinians' opening position, not the Israelis'.

U.S. Secretary of State Baker's five points invigorated the Egyptian initiative, avoided humiliat-

ing the Palestinians regarding the way their delegation was to be assembled, and provided Israel with the assurance that it was not going to negotiate with PLO officials and that the pre-negotiations in Egypt would not be a framework for discussing the final settlement.

Pre-negotiations on the modalities of the elections in the territories and the authority the elected delegation would have are an initial, indispensable stage of the process. Baker's points laid down the best achievable, formal basis of this stage. Playing with words and formulations cannot be a substitute for a bold decision. The American administration must put the dictionary on the shelf and ask the two sides to make up their minds: Do they want to talk to each other or not?

Is there hope for the peace process? Yes, there is, if the Palestinians and the Israelis accept some facts of life and decide to sit and talk. The Palestinians must understand that violence and terrorism will never soften the positions of the Israelis, but, rather, will harden them. Brutality will increase hatred. None of their national aspirations will be realised in this manner.

Israel has to understand that it has to negotiate with the Palestinian representatives who exist, not with those who do not. All Palestinians who reach the negotiating table, whether affiliated to the PLO or not, will bring a position that constitutes the Palestinian national consensus — namely, the demand to end Israeli rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Palestinians who

may be satisfied with municipal autonomy do not exist, and waiting for them is a waste of time.

Furthermore, to think that the elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are a way to drive a wedge between the residents of these territories and the PLO is an illusion. To repeatedly declare this intention is a way to ensure that neither the Palestinians in the territories nor the PLO leadership will accept the idea of elections. A pragmatic, moderate Palestinian leadership in the territories can be strengthened only if it is evident that moderation pays, that political achievements can be gained only through negotiation and understanding with Israel.

Positive decisions from the Palestinian side and the Israeli side are interdependent. The

Palestinians would talk if they were sure that the Israelis were willing to negotiate a solution in good faith, not dictate one. Most Israelis would be ready to attend a dialogue with the Palestinians if they were convinced of the existence of a partner with clean hands.

Of course, if nothing changes and the status quo is maintained, there will be a higher price paid by both sides. On the Palestinian side, militant radicals will take over in the territories as well as in the leadership of the PLO. Radicalisation in the West Bank will inevitably inspire radicalisation on the east bank.

We cannot isolate this discussion from current international trends. It is obvious that the world is in a process of change that includes four main trends:

□ Resolution of regional conflicts through negotiations.

□ More self-rule and independence to small nations and ethnic minorities.

□ Transformation from authoritarian and dictatorial regimes to more democratic forms of government.

□ Growing economic cooperation and integration on a regional basis.

The death of the peace process will sooner or later lead to military confrontations in which new weapons will be unleashed in the Middle East.

The fate of the proposed Israeli-Palestinian dialogue will determine whether our region joins the global process of change or whether it remains outside those developments, to be plagued by endless, devastating conflict. — The Jerusalem Post.

Vietnam resists any crumbling of Communist rule

By Joseph de Rienzo

Reuters

BANGKOK — The crumbling of Communist rule in Eastern Europe will not spread to the worker-peasant state of Vietnam — at least, not if its leaders can help it.

Spartan Vietnam sees the victory of Socialism and the death of capitalism as inevitable. According to the state media, the Vietnamese Communist Party alone will lead the country.

Sweeping reforms of the shattered economy, begun in 1986, will continue, but with the goal of consolidating Socialism to fully develop its superiority, the official press has said.

The Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) is taking steps to prevent any local clamour for change similar to the upheavals against Communist rule in East Germany, Poland, Hungary and other East European states.

"Imperialism is trying to capitalise on the difficult situation in a number of Socialist countries to fiercely undermine Socialism," the party daily Nhan Dan said on November 3.

East Europe's transformation comes at a crucial time for Vietnam.

In Hanoi, the leadership is changing from the revolutionaries who bested the armies of France and the United States to managers who must remedy appalling economic problems.

There is a strong anti-Communist streak among southern Vietnamese as well as antipathy to the mainly northerner-led Communist Party. There have also been some calls among students and peasants for more freedom and further liberalisation of the economy, but nothing on the scale of what is happening in Europe.

Hanoi's dim view of European events has aligned it with the hardline Communist govern-

ments of China and Cuba. It says an imperialist strategy of "peaceful evolution — to win without waging war" is at work.

According to Nhan Dan, capitalists are natural imperialists who are persuading nations to move towards political pluralism and develop along capitalist paths.

"The U.S. lifestyle is being propagated and decadent culture is being exported into Socialist countries," it said.

"The situation at home and abroad has adversely affected the thinking of our cadres, party members and people," Nhan Dan commentator Thai Minh wrote.

"Some people pay attention only to economic interests while belittling political interests and national security," he added.

Party newspapers stress that Communist Party work must be intensified "to affirm the historical inevitability of Socialism and the unavoidable extinction of capitalism."

A state radio commentary last week said the working class were not only people "working with their muscles, but also those working with their brain or with both muscle and brain combined."

It said the implanting of Communist ideals was a pressing requirement — "especially for youths and teenagers."

A senior political department officer said in a radio commentary last week that capitalism was doomed but that earlier Vietnamese predictions of its quick demise were premature.

"An appropriate attitude at this time is that we should not make any firm prediction about the day of (capitalism's) death," said radio commentator Dao Loc Binh.

"Since the capitalist system is still capable of adapting itself to change... capitalism may still last longer than we might have expected," he added.

Deng cements place in China's history

By Gey Dimmore

Reuters

PEKING — At 85 and clearly ailing, China's senior leader Deng Xiaoping is cementing his place in official Chinese history with glorification of his wartime role more than 40 years ago.

Chinese journalists expect the cult of Deng to intensify after his resignation this month as head of the central military commission, his last Communist Party post.

Deng's restrained personality cult is far from giving him the God-like status ascribed to his predecessor, Chairman Mao Tse-tung. But the cult of Deng has blossomed since the army, acting on his orders, crushed pro-democracy demonstrations in Peking in June, killing hundreds of civilians.

Front page reports and pictures in official newspapers on Tuesday showed Deng meeting military editors who are turning his role in the party's fight for power into official history.

Their book will be published next year on the exploits of the second field army led by Deng as political commissar in 1949, the

year of the Communist revolution.

"The second field army dared to take on heavy tasks, overcome hardships, and met or even exceeded military objectives set by Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Communist Party," Deng said, quoted by Liberation Army News.

Deng was shown on state television in the Great Hall of the People greeting the 11 historians and generals, most of whom had fought with him against the Nationalists.

Defence Minister Qin Jiwei shouted their names into Deng's ear as they were introduced one by one. Deng appeared not to remember who they all were.

Diplomats noted that Deng's present power base dates back to his second field army days — General Yang Baibing, promoted in the military reshuffle this month, and General Song Ren-qiong, a leading party adviser, both have long-standing allegiances.

The official New China News Agency said the second field army made outstanding contributions during the anti-Japanese war of

1937 to 1945 and the civil war up to 1949.

According to Western historians, however, the second field army was born of a military reorganisation in 1949.

A month after the student-led movement was crushed, cinemas around China released the "baise uprising," a tribute to Deng's role in a 1929 rebellion in southern China.

Major speeches Deng made in the 1950s have been republished. He features prominently in a massive painting hanging in the national gallery, depicting Communist guerrillas in their Yaman stronghold in the 1930s.

"These periods are less controversial and fading in the memories of the old, irrelevant for the young," a Western diplomat commented.

Deng's handpicked successor in the military commission — party leader Jiang Zemin — is seen by diplomats as relying heavily on Deng's support for his political survival.

Despite the party's attempts to carve Deng's historical niche while he is still alive, many people in Peking say they will re-

member him mainly for the bloody events of June.

"People hate Deng. What the army did was unthinkable, unthinkable. He will be remembered for this," an elderly intellectual said.

Older people, while praising the economic reforms he launched in 1978, also link Deng to his role in the persecution of intellectuals in the anti-rightist campaign of 1957.

A few people in Peking set off fireworks to "celebrate" Deng's resignation despite the risk of being arrested under martial law which has been in force in the city for six months.

A crucial central committee meeting this month summed up Deng's career with the words "an outstanding Marxist, a staunch Communist, a brilliant proletarian revolutionary, statesman and military strategist and a long-term leader of our party and our country."

Some Chinese wonder whether Deng will meet the same fate as Mao, who was glorified while alive but criticised after his death in 1976 for making serious mistakes in his old age.

Aquino to face Islamic pressure

By Jeremy Clift

Reuters

MANILA — President Corazon Aquino is likely to face fresh pressure from Islamic states for peace talks with Muslim rebels after voters overwhelmingly rejected her government's autonomy proposals for the southern Philippines.

But the government, despite suffering its first electoral defeat in Sunday's plebiscite since being swept to power in 1986, appears reluctant to reopen talks with the separatist Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

"It's very difficult for this government to accede to the impossible demands of (MNLF Chairman) Nur Misuari," said Philippine local government secretary Luis Santos on Tuesday.

Only three or four Muslim areas of the southern Philippines opted for the autonomy plan,

while Christian-dominated areas rejected the proposals by majorities of up to 90 per cent.

Analysts said provinces which voted to join the proposed autonomous area were divided by both distance and traditional tribal rivalries, making the plan almost unworkable.

"Muslim Senator Saturmina Rasul urged the government to resume talks with the MNLF possibly under the auspices of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to bring peace to Mindanao, divided by decades of bloodshed."

The 45-nation OIC, chief backer of separatist Muslim rebels in Mindanao, had asked for the plebiscite to be cancelled by Manila dismissed the suggestion.

Asian and Middle Eastern diplomats said they expected the OIC to press Manila to renew talks with the MNLF in the search for a workable and accept-

able autonomous region. Rasul said the OIC was the only group that could convince Misuari to shift what she termed his "rigid" position.

NEWS ANALYSIS

But Secretary Santos told reporters Misuari had been overtaken by events, and the guerrilla leader would lose his political clout with the creation of the autonomous region.

The MNLF wants 13 provinces in the southern Philippines to be given autonomy, with the MNLF controlling a regional security force. Manila has rejected the proposal.

Aquino herself played down the impact of the crushing defeat for the government's autonomy proposals, saying it was a victory for democracy that so many voted.

She said she would not be

bullied into negotiating with the MNLF. "First of all, we should not be talking simply because we are being threatened," she told reporters when asked if she was willing to resume talks with the guerrillas in light of the Mindanao vote.

The MNLF, which launched a separatist war that killed more than 50,000 people in the 1970s, had warned of renewed war if Manila pushed its autonomy plan through.

Aquino said she would consult the congress on the next steps to take and, adding to the MNLF threat, added, "we should not really encourage people to threaten us with acts of violence."

Armed forces chief-of-staff General Renato de Villa told reporters on Tuesday that despite the MNLF call for a boycott of the poll, in some Muslim areas there had been a large vote.

Focus on People Glass menageries

By Mariam M. Shakhin

IN different shades of blue, aqua green and clear glass, vases, mugs, glasses, and glass imitations of animals from the snake to the dolphin are found in shops all over Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Palestine. They are "hand made", ornaments, souvenirs or daily utensils from the "Holy Land". Tourists from the U.S. to Japan have been buying the glassblown vases and cups for years, taking them back home to be put on the shelf with the other "indigenous" art works from countries whose age-old crafts are slowly disappearing. Although the demand for the indigenous Arab crafts has multiplied in the last five years and some crafts are being revived as a result of the demand, glassblowers in particular are very difficult to find. Their profession demands not only a meticulous and artistic nature, it also requires a physical stamina and dedication to the craft that few are apparently willing to give. One such glassblower who has "given" for the last 35 years is Suleiman Suleiman, this week he talks to Focus on People.

Suleiman, an accomplished glassblower at 43, learnt his craft from his father at the age of eight in his home town of Furqus south-east of Homs in Syria. His father was the town's glassblower and traded with major commercial centres such as Homs and Aleppo to the north. Suleiman was the oldest son and his father needed him in the shop, which consisted of an outdoor brick and clay oven, a stool and a small room to store the glass. Suleiman Jr. thus became his father's apprentice at 10 and was making blue and green coloured glass menageries at 13. School was only possible for the nine younger brothers and sisters, "but one thing they never learned how to do at school was make glass menageries" Suleiman says.

Suleiman's choice of career or rather his established career has taken a heavy toll on his health. At 43, his hair is white, his lungs are fragile, he weighs no more than 45 kilograms on his 1.5 metre frame and his blue eyes are always red.

"I knew when I looked at my father that I would age young, but there was nothing I could do, glassblowing was the only trade I knew," says Suleiman when asked why he chose to stay in a trade that would be so taxing on his health. "When I was old enough and independent enough to do things on my own, I married my maternal cousin, and we had children right away, so there was no time to think about shifting careers."

When the economic situation in Syria became tough on the artisan community in particular, Suleiman, his wife and four children left Syria for Beirut and Baalbak in Lebanon in the early 1970s. There he found that artisans could still make a subsistence living. Local tastes differed from other Arab communities who still spent bundles on European crystal glass, and Arab and foreign tourists alike provided a good clientele for anything that just "looked" Levantine, Suleiman recalls.

After seven relatively prosperous years in Lebanon, Suleiman decided that the no war no peace situation had no ending in sight so he moved to Egypt. "We were sad to leave Beirut, but we wanted to stay alive. My fellow Lebanese artisans were much braver, I still get news from them once-in-a-while. Most of them are still alive," Suleiman says as if relieved that he did not leave them behind to perish.

Suleiman's wife Rabya (she was the fourth of five daughters), did not like Cairo after Beirut, and the economic conditions were such that she had to work to help sustain the family. Rabya, Suleiman points out, knows how to read and write and found a job in a beauty salon in downtown Cairo. Suleiman's luck in Cairo was not as good as Rabya's and he worked in no less than ten glass producing "factories" in the ten years he lived in the Egyptian capital.

"In Egypt it is hard to make a living because there are many artisans. There is a large souq and lots of tourists, but the wages are low and with all the bagging one hardly makes a profit," Suleiman says.

After marrying off his three daughters in Egypt, Suleiman, Rabya and their son Riad came to Jordan in 1987. Rabya doesn't work anymore but Riad finished high school and while keeping a clerical job in the morning, helps his father in the afternoon. Suleiman is now employed at one of Amman's most commercially busy artisan centres. The owners have provided him with an oven and lots of glass. On Fridays and in the afternoons children come to watch him create glass menageries with fascinated eyes, "make us some more" they keep on saying until it's time for them to go.

Tastes in the Arab World have developed in the past decade to include local artisan crafts which had been pushed aside for most of the century as "old fashioned and unrefined."

The craft of glassmaking and blowing which existed before the birth of Christ, is being developed, says Suleiman. "Now they are painting the glass with gold and silver designs and are making glazed patterns of different kinds. Some are even decorating the glasses with calligraphy, it's quite nice."

While some glassblowers are experimenting with green and yellow stripes or mauve and pink designs, Suleiman prefers the straight forward classical blue and green glasses that his father taught him how to make. "What I know how to do I make the best," he asserted with a smile that showed his missing teeth.



A new semi-floating rice variety at Bara nursery

The lifeline of rice

By Ruth Massey

TIMBUKTU, Mali — Sixteen men in turbans and long loose tunics sit in a semi-circle in the living room of a house in this legendary town. The men are Songhai farmers, the chairmen and treasurers of eight village associations engaged in a common endeavour — to grow rice in the desert. They have come from their farms to meet with two representatives of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the organisation that launched them on a project that has rescued them from poverty. Five years ago, they were destitute, victims of a terrible drought. Now, with several good rice-growing years behind them, they can plan for the future.

This ancient oasis town, with its rich and romantic past, was once the golden city of West Africa, a place of learning and commerce. But Timbuktu's magic was sadly missing five years ago when wells dried up and sandstorms howled through the streets. The Niger river, which flows through the region, fell to its lowest level in living memory.

When the rains failed, Songhai farmers could no longer cultivate *glaberrima*, or floating rice, as they had for hundreds of years beside the Niger river as it travelled from Timbuktu to Gao, 600 kilometres to the east. For centuries, they had counted on the Niger to overflow its banks and flood the lowlands where they sowed their seeds. When the drought interrupted this cycle the results were catastrophic. Many Songhai were forced to seek work in towns and cities that had no jobs to offer them. The lives of a million people were at risk.

The turning point for 13,000 inhabitants in villages of the Timbuktu and Gao regions came in 1984, when UNCDF launched a plan to grow irrigated rice in the desert using water pumped from the Niger. Pipes were run several hundred metres from the riverbank to the empty, sandy terrain. Seeds and pesticides, as well as

fuel, lubricants and spare parts for the pumps, were made available through a revolving fund to be reimbursed by farmers from dues paid to their village associations.

Three U.N. Volunteers financed by the United Nations Development Programme worked side-by-side with the farmers from the beginning. One of them, Wim Schreurs, an agronomist from the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands, developed a new hybrid of rice. Schreurs crossed *glaberrima*, which is sown in the wind, with irrigated Asian rice, which is planted by hand, seedling by seedling. Whereas *glaberrima* delivers a low yield — 900 kilos per hectare — the new variety produces over twice that amount.

Encouraged by their neighbours' success, 15 more villages with 12,000 inhabitants formed similar associations, pooled their land and began growing irrigated rice. By liberating farmers from their dependence on rain, the pumps have made it possible to grow two crops a year instead of one. By the end of 1988, UNCDF's US\$6.6 million investment had enabled farmers to clear and irrigate 817 hectares of land producing 400 tonnes of paddy rice a year.

The village associations' contract with UNCDF also calls for trees to be planted as windbreaks to shield crops against the sand-laden winds that sweep across the plain. But, like most Sahelians, Songhai farmers have traditionally looked to trees for firewood rather than crop protection. They were reluctant to use precious water for anything other than growing crops. When local authorities failed to deliver the five kilos of maize they had promised as an incentive for each tree planted, the farmers stopped watering the trees and they died.

The windbreak problem is on top of the agenda as the Songhai community leaders begin their meeting with UNCDF representatives in Timbuktu. "You are

citizens of Mali just as I am," says Maimouna Sy, who helps coordinate the UNCDF project. She says she understands the farmer's resistance to windbreaks, but stresses that they are essential for crop protection. "If the governor promised you maize and did not deliver," she says, "you have the right to take that up with him. But you were given trees to plant as windbreaks as part of your contract with UNCDF."

"Windbreaks are essential for healthy crops just as good book-keeping is essential for healthy finances," adds Dominique Ait Ouyahia, a UNCDF representative who has come from New York to review the project. She has touched on a sensitive issue — the associations' accounting practices.

Songhai tradition calls for complete discretion in assisting people in need. If someone requires funds to feed his family he will ask for a loan in the dead of night. At the same time, a Songhai's word is his bond, and he will always repay his debt. "The amounts that are not in the bank are in our heads," says the treasurer of the village of Iloa. "We know where the money is, and most of it has already been paid back."

However honourable, committing figures to memory can lead to confusion when hundreds of farmers and scores of villagers are involved. Moreover, it is UNCDF policy that standard accounting procedures be followed wherever revolving funds are set up.

Most treasurers are now learning to keep accounts with the help of instructors from the government's Direction Regionale de l'Action Cooperative, known as DRACOOP. "There wasn't much point in knowing how to read and write in the past," says Mamadou Sountoura, DRACOOP's regional director in Gao. "You have to have village committees that are capable of keeping accounts, otherwise you won't go very far." DRACOOP also offers courses in marketing rice

and calculating how much fertiliser and insecticide is necessary to boost crop yields.

Bara, a farm community 30 kilometres north of Gao, has gone far indeed. Growing two crops a year on 190 hectares, villagers pay their taxes, feed and clothe their families and reimburse the communal revolving fund which pays for seeds, fuel, and pesticides essential for next season's planting. This year they intend to use some of their profits to build a village dispensary.

"The people in Bara understand perfectly well that they need as many literate members as possible, including women," says Sountoura. — UNDP.

Zambia and the IMF make friends again

By John Munkala

The Zambian government has drawn up a new economic programme to which the IMF has given a nod of approval. But before any new loans are made, Zambia must resume payments on its outstanding debt.

LUSAKA, Zambia — Zambia, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank appear to be approaching a reconciliation. Two and a half years ago, a disagreement over economic reform policies led to an end of IMF balance-of-payments support for Zambia. The country also suffered a loss of aid for development programmes.

Now, however, the government has drawn up a policy framework paper (PFP) which has received a nod of approval from the IMF and the World Bank, establishing the basis for renewed co-operation.

According to Finance Minister Gibson Chigaga after talks in Washington with the IMF and the World Bank, the two institutions reviewed the PFP and found it acceptable. The programme tackles issues such as realistic exchange rates, liberalised import regulations, reductions in money supply and budget deficits, the decontrol of consumer prices and a lifting of subsidies. To get away from the country's reliance on copper exports, the government plans to increase growth in non-metal sectors from this year's 1.9 per cent to 5.5 per cent in 1993, and to reduce inflation from this year's 95 per cent to 15 per cent in 1993.

President Kenneth Kaunda's main preoccupation at present is to woo more loans from donors and to bail out an economy close to collapse. His latest strategy has included far-reaching measures, chief among which are a 47 per cent kwacha devaluation, an issue of new currency and moves towards ending government subsidies on almost all commodities. The last time the government tried to reduce subsidies on maize meal — the staple food — there were riots.

Showing renewed confidence,

Western donor governments have begun dangling aid carrots, promising more assistance if Zambia demonstrates the will to press ahead with its reforms.

As part of the PFP, a programme of investment in the public sector is also under way. Projects have been carefully selected with an emphasis on completing those already ongoing, or particularly in need of rehabilitation. Plant, machinery, roads and general infrastructure are given top priority. New projects will no doubt be undertaken but must have a high economic rate of return.

Some of the changes are already yielding results. The currency change has brought excess money down to manageable proportions and traders now bank most of their money for fear of further government action. In the last change, many were caught unaware, and those who had hoarded money in their houses found themselves having to pay a 50 per cent withholding tax to the government.

Discrepancies, however, still remain. For instance, while a quarter of the government's total budget is swallowed up by military expenditure, spending on health services and education has dropped alarmingly. Twenty-five years after independence, the government has turned away from electoral promises based on Kaunda's humanist society.

The government recognises, however, that it will have to retain some protective measures for the most vulnerable groups of people. At present it intends to retain coupons for maize meal for the benefit of the lowest income groups; provisionally retain the fertiliser subsidy for small-scale farmers; and provide financial incentives to encourage the resettlement of urban dwellers to rural areas. — PANOS.

High-tech tailors insulate the U.S. space shuttle

By Beth Dickey

NEEDLES, thread, sewing machines and other sewing tools are becoming a common sight at some U.S. space shuttle factories.

The tailors, better known as thermal protection system mechanics at the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, are making heat-resistant flexible insulation blankets for U.S. space shuttles. The mechanics make the blankets from fibreglass cloth or metal-coated mylar. They work from multi-page patterns, often stitching by hand to make coverings of all shapes and sizes that fit precisely into pre-measured spaces on the fuselage or in the payload bay of each shuttle.

The thermal protection system keeps temperatures on the spacecraft's aluminium skin within design limits — 176 degrees C. Without the tiles and blankets, the space shuttle fuselage would contract or expand as it encoun-

ters temperatures as cold as minus 157 degrees C in space or as hot as 1,650 degrees as it returns to Earth. Nearly three-fourths of each shuttle has a heat-resistant covering of tiles and blankets to shield astronauts and cargo against the searing temperatures.

Few of the mechanics have professional garment-making experience, but many enjoy sewing as a hobby. However, while a missed stitch in a hand-made shirt may be no big deal, a crooked seam on the space shuttle could be disastrous. That is why blankets must be sewn precisely.

Sewing for the space shuttle is not easy, says technician David Sheets. "Learning to read the blueprints for the patterns is as difficult as sewing the blankets," he says.

Technician Marie Smith prepares a rectangular quilt 10 centimetres wide and 46 centimetres long that will fit on the midbody

of space shuttle Columbia. Smith has been sewing for the space shuttle for nearly 10 years and she can make one or two of these blankets a day. There are about 2,300 blankets on each shuttle, and no two are exactly alike.

"Every stitch on each blanket is checked and rechecked for quality," says Connie Weatherly, who rips out a machine stitch made on a silvery pad that will fit inside Columbia's payload bay. She is redoing her work because she isn't satisfied.

For Weatherly and many of her co-workers, knowing their hands have touched the shuttle is half the fun of getting paid.

"The job's got a lot of short-term and long-term benefits," says another technician, Howard Baker. "You get to jump up and down every time there's a launch. You're able to do something for your country and have a good job, too, and that's hard to beat." — The Christian Science Monitor.

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Gulf capital markets face uncertain future

By Eric Hall
Reuters

DUBAI — Gulf Arab capital markets face an uncertain future as regional state deficits, which encouraged their creation, disappear under a new influx of oil revenues.

The issue of public debt in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states began only three years ago when the mid-1980s oil price collapse wiped out surpluses and threatened reserves.

But in a region where up to 90 per cent of revenues can come from oil, higher oil prices are reversing the equation.

Independent economists believe oil revenues in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar could be up to 30 per cent higher this year, large-

ly due to firmer prices and higher output to match world demand.

"Deficits pushed governments into creating the markets. What happens if the deficits disappear?" asked one bank economist.

One group of Gulf policy-makers and economists want much broader local markets to use private sector capital more efficiently for economic growth, rather than invested overseas.

But the traditional social and religious values of the region do not fit easily with free capital markets.

Traditionally, political and economic patronage was held firmly in the hands of Gulf Arab rulers. The hundreds of billions of oil dollars merely helped centralise control further, economist said.

"In these economies, the

capital that has become available has been in government's hands and has been channelled down to the private sector," said an official at one Gulf central bank.

Islam's ban on usury has restricted capital market growth by focusing religious disapproval on the use of interest rates, the economists said.

Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman have developed government debt markets. Qatar is studying the issue of public debt. The UAE has a weekly certificates of deposit market.

Saudi Arabia, the biggest GCC economy, during the 1970s oil boom created an industrial sector almost totally with government funds.

When the state fell into deficit in the mid-1980s, funding this quasi-government industry became a burden.

Even Saudi Arabia's reserves were not limitless and, after drawing down tens of billions of dollars to finance the economy, in June, 1988 it began offering two to five year development bonds.

The bonds were issued in large denominations.

At first they were offered only to Saudi banks and institutions, and sold at a discount, linked to U.S. treasuries at 20 to 30 points over like-dated U.S. paper, Saudi-based economists said.

The result was that the bonds were attractive only when U.S. treasuries are attractive, and the great bulk ended up on the books of government institutions and local banks.

In an attempt to create a secondary market, banks were later allowed to sell them on to local investors, but this has been largely only as part of

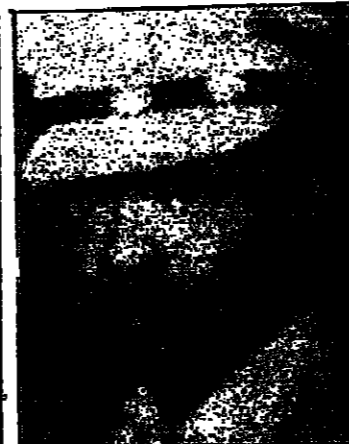
investment trust portfolios.

Opinion about the future of the market is divided. Some Western economists think a return to big state surpluses will at best lead to a suspension of activity in the bonds market.

But Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency Governor Sheikh Hamad Al Sayari was quoted this week as saying that efforts to improve the efficiency of the market were continuing.

Others also believe that the government has seen the error of relying too much on state-led growth. "There might be another oil price crash," said a Gulf bank economist.

"The basic commitment to shift responsibility for economic growth to the private sector is there, although I am taking a long-term view of this," said a Saudi-based diplomat.



Omar Hassan Al Bashir

Sudan junta prepares economic reforms

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's military government has set the stage for its first big economic moves with a three-week conference publicising the painful virtues of cuts in food subsidies and other state spending.

Foreign economists in Khartoum said the junta, which overthrew an elected government in June, was expected to announce reforms before the end of the month in hope of restoring credit with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The IMF declared Sudan ineligible for fresh credit in 1986 and the country, racked by war and famine, is behind in its payments by an estimated \$1.4 billion.

"Sudan will tell the IMF that it sees the benefits of... reforms," said one Western economist. "But it will also tell the fund that it is economic and political nonsense to do it all at once."

The IMF has long demanded a unified and realistic foreign exchange rate for the Sudanese pound, spending cuts and a freeze on state employment. It wants Sudan to collect more tax and to streamline or sell loss-making government ventures.

Economists said General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, the junta strongman, would have to move cautiously because of political and social risks.

Unpopular measures along IMF-favoured lines were frustrated under previous government by violent protests. Bashir has outlawed strikes and street demonstrations along with political parties and trade unions.

The economists said prospects for reform seemed strengthened when recent rises in the price of bread and sugar passed without signs of popular discontent.

Africa's largest country, Sudan is burdened by an estimated \$14-billion foreign debt it cannot repay. Annual inflation rate is close to 100 per cent and economists say it could hit 500 per cent if the currency were devalued.

The conference concluded Tuesday night was billed in the junta-controlled media as a bid to end Sudan's crushing poverty.

It wound up with a lengthy statement of general proposals ranging from a tight money policy to boosting exports, food self-sufficiency and the rehabilitation of the crumbling infrastructure.

CBJ sets minimum rate of interest for l/c deposits

AMMAN (Petra) — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Wednesday issued a memorandum allowing banks and financial companies in Jordan to pay a minimum interest of five per cent annually on all funds deposited with them by customers for letters of credit (L/Cs), clear drafts and guaranteed time drafts.

A CBJ statement said the measure was deemed necessary to enable Jordanian importers to make appropriate returns on amounts of guarantees in cash when they commence procedures for imports. But, it said, this should take place with a cash-guarantee margin as defined earlier by the CBJ.

The CBJ earlier defined the cash guarantee rates as follows:

- a. 30 per cent on imports of all food supplies and medicines which cannot be produced locally, primary materials used in the local industry like packaging and packing, and spare parts for industrial machines and equipment used for agricultural production so as to support the industrial and agricultural sectors.
- b. 70 per cent on the rest of imported commodities.
- c. 80 per cent on all commodities imported through the free zone, provided that this will be exacted in foreign currency from the agent who must draw from any one of the following sources: his own foreign account, foreign cash or incoming transfers in foreign currency.

ACC states to have holding company

AMMAN (J.T.) — A four-member technical committee set up by the countries of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) to study the question of establishing a holding company for Egypt, Iraq, North Yemen and Jordan holds its final session in Amman Thursday to endorse a draft agreement defining all statutes related to the projected company.

An announcement here Wednesday said the committee discussed all aspects related to the company's future work and the proposals on areas of investment to be conducted under its umbrella to serve economic integration among the four Arab states.

The announcement said the draft agreement and recommendations will be submitted to an ACC ministerial council meeting, which will be held later in Sanaa, capital of North Yemen.

The committee groups representatives of federations of chambers of industry and trade in the four countries who presented remarks on the projected company and its prospective operations.

Number of firms rise at Sahab Industrial City

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of 29 industrial businesses were established in the Sahab Industrial City near Amman during the first 10 months of 1989, raising the total number of businesses in the facility to 164, according to Dr. Fayed Subheimat, director general of the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC).

Subheimat said Sahab now groups industries that offer employment to 4,400 workers and technicians, and have an overall capital of JD 75 million.

Earlier this year, the JIEC enlarged the Sahab Industrial City zone by carrying out an expansion plan to accommodate more companies and cope with the increasing number of requests by investors. The JIEC also embarked on the establishment of another industrial city in the Irbid area.

According to Subheimat, the industries in Sahab deal with electric, metal, food, pharmaceutical, textile, furniture, plastic, leather and construction products.

Poland devalues zloty

WARSAW (R) — Poland devalued the zloty nearly nine per cent Monday in the sixth substantial devaluation since the Solidarity government took office in September.

The National Bank reduced the value of the currency by 8.3 per cent setting a new rate of 3,400 zloties to the dollar against 3,100 Friday, according to figures published in the government newspaper Rzeczpospolita.

The rate was 1,441 when the government was appointed on Sept. 12. It has since devalued the zloty by 57.6 per cent.

The government wants to close the gap between the official exchange rate and the free market rate to stabilise the currency and achieve domestic convertibility by next January.

The free market rate has dropped since September from about 12,000 zloties to the dollar to about 7,000. The official rate applies only to foreign tourists, foreign trade dealings and official statistics.

Poland's solidarity-led government could face further economic problems as exports of coal, an important foreign exchange earner, are likely to fall sharply this year, a senior industry ministry official has said.

Senislav Okrasa, deputy director of the ministry's coal and energy department, said Poland, one of the world's leading coal producers, was expected to export almost 12 per cent less of the fuel this year than in 1988.

The government had not made a final decision but his department had recommended exports this year of 28.2 million tonnes compared with 32 million tonnes in 1988.

U.S. allocates nearly \$15b for foreign aid

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush signed into law a \$14.6-billion foreign aid bill Tuesday night that includes the first cash in a promised three-year aid programme for Poland and Hungary.

The measure includes \$533 million in new aid for Poland and Hungary — aid which has become politically popular because of the wave of economic and political reform sweeping Eastern Europe.

About \$293 million would be in cash, including support for new private enterprise and to stabilise Poland's currency. The rest would come in trade and investment insurance.

It also includes \$85 million in unfettered military aid for El Salvador, where a weeklong spate of intense warfare has prompted congressional calls for a re-examination of U.S. policy.

As usual, more than one-third of U.S. aid goes to the two parties to the Camp David accord, Israel and Egypt. Israel is due to receive \$1.8 billion in military aid and \$1.2 billion in economic aid, while Egypt will get \$1.3 billion in military aid and \$815 million in economic assistance.

Other aid in the bill is earmarked for the Philippines, which would get \$160 million as the U.S. share of a new international assistance programme; Turkey, with \$500 million, in military aid; Greece, with \$350 million in military aid; \$230 million in economic aid for Pakistan; \$440 million in economic aid to be shared among the four Central American democracies as the Bush administration sees fit; and \$20 million for an economic development fund for Northern Ireland.

The Bush administration agreed to accept one item it had argued vociferously against, a section written by Representative David Obey that would bar the administration from using aid money to buy support from other countries for policies the United States could not legally carry out itself.

Agreement came after Obey rose on the house floor and announced the section was not intended to tie the hands of administration officials carrying out their normal diplomatic duties, but was only to bar explicit "quid pro quo" deals with other countries to carry out prohibited activities.

A similar provision in the bill authorising State Department activities prompted a veto by Bush Tuesday night.

China's internal debt tops \$21b

BEIJING (AP) — China has a domestic debt of 80 billion yuan (\$21.6 billion) and will begin incurring new debts to repay old ones with the approach of a peak repayment period next year, a senior economist has said.

Zhang Jialun, deputy director of the state debt management department under the finance ministry, told the official Xinhua news agency the government must repay 30 billion yuan (\$8.1 billion) in debts next year.

Zhang stressed that all debts will be paid off in time. However, the government also faces maturation next year of about \$7 billion of an estimated \$44 billion in foreign loans and has been hit by shortfalls in tax revenues as the economy slides toward recession.

Zhang said domestic bonds, revived in China in 1981, include 51 billion yuan (\$13.8 billion) in state treasury bonds, 5.4 billion yuan (\$1.46 billion) in construction bonds and 12 billion yuan (\$3.2 billion) in "value-preserving" bonds.

He said the domestic debt does not include bonds locally issued by Chinese banks and enterprises.

State workers are now required to buy two types of bonds: State bonds, which amount to about four per cent of annual wages, and public debt bonds, about eight per cent of yearly income.

The state issued 12 billion yuan (\$3.2 billion) in public debt bonds in June, and gave workers until the end of the year to buy them. The bonds mature in three years.

Zhang said in 1981 bonds were of 10-year duration and provided interest of only four per cent, but that now they mature in two or three years. The interest rate has jumped from 14 per cent at the beginning of this year to about 20 per cent now.

China's inflation rate is also about 20 per cent.

The government says its budget deficit for the past few years has been around eight billion yuan (\$2.2 billion), but Western economists say it could be as much as four times that amount if foreign loans and the issuance of treasury bonds were included.

The budgetary crisis has worsened in recent months as a sharp economic downturn, fallout from a yearlong austerity programme, has cut tax revenues from money-losing factories and left many state-run enterprises without funds to repay loans from the state.

Beijing's conservative leaders, who are stressing that large state-owned industries must be the mainstay of China's socialist economy, have also been forced into shelling out billions of yuan in subsidies to keep inefficient, unprofitable industries afloat.

The Communist party, at a party plenum earlier this month that called for at least two more years of economic belt-tightening, said balancing the budget will be a major goal in the coming years.

Zhang, however, said China will adopt a method of incurring new debts to repay old ones and establish a domestic debt repayment foundation in the next few years.

Meanwhile, China's central bank has quietly tightened regulations on foreign exchange, limiting purchases of foreign currency and restricting its sale to those with airline tickets out of the country.

The new regulations stem from the outflow of foreign capital and suggest the government could be considering a devaluation of the Chinese currency, but economists in Beijing say they doubt that would happen soon.

Under the restrictions, which apply to foreign visitors as well as Chinese, holders of foreign currency certificates can only repurchase 50 per cent of the amount of foreign currency they originally sold, according to a Bank of China official who would not give his name.

Thus anyone who has con-

verted U.S. dollars to foreign exchange certificates (FECs) would be encouraged to spend at least half in China.

But customers may withdraw from their FEC accounts in the form of checks, which can be cashed into foreign currencies overseas, the official said.

Customers must also present an airplane ticket proving that they need the money because they are going overseas, the official said. They may make deposits to Bank of China FEC accounts that already exist.

The new regulations, put into effect about a month ago, were not announced publicly, the official said.

China has a dual currency system, with the yuan divided into renminbi, for domestic use, and FECs for foreigners and Chinese who exchange foreign currency.

The Bank of China official would not say why the restrictions were imposed but called them "a reasonable measure."

"It's a very serious thing," said an official of the Beijing office of a European-based Credit Bank.

"It's a move to tighten the economy and more closely monitor foreign exchange," said the banker, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"They've done this because many Chinese have FECs in their hands which they change to U.S. dollars on the black market," he said. "It is primarily to restrict the cash going out. There are less U.S. dollars in cash available and people have less to play around with in the open market."

The double-currency system has spawned a lively black market in FECs and convertible foreign currencies, primarily U.S. dollars.

Chinese generally need FECs to purchase imported items, and must prove they have dollars or other foreign currencies in order to travel or study abroad.

The Bank of China could be trying to discourage illegal foreign currency transactions.

"But the black market has fallen," the banker said. "You get less for dollars, and the black market centres have been clamped down upon."

The black market price for the U.S. dollar has dropped from about eight yuan a year ago to five or six yuan today, the banker said. The official exchange rate for the yuan is 3.7 to the dollar.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday November 22, 1989					
Central Bank official rates					
	Buy	Sell			
U.S. dollar	640.0	646.0	French franc	103.6	104.6
Pound Sterling	1002.4	1012.4	Japanese yen (for 100)	444.8	449.2
Deutschemark	352.7	356.2	Dutch guilder	312.6	315.7
Swiss franc	396.5	400.5	Swedish crown	99.7	100.7
			Italian lira (for 100)	47.9	48.4
			Belgian franc (for 10)	167.4	169.1

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.5720/30	U.S. dollars	
One U.S. dollar	1.1695/705	Canadian dollar	
	1.8035/45	Deutschemark	
	2.0343/53	Dutch guilders	
	1.6045/55	Swiss francs	
	37.86/89	Belgian francs	
	6.1500/50	French francs	
	1330/1331	Italian lire	
	143.70/80	Japanese yen	
	6.3980/4030	Swedish crowns	
	6.8525/75	Norwegian crowns	
	7.0140/90	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	408.25/75	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — A surge in the price of gold sparked a rush of buying in Australian gold and resource stocks and helped push the share market to a firm close. The All Ordinaries Index rose 8.5 to 1,637.7.

TOKYO — Share prices surged to a record high close, buoyed by new investment trust funds and buying by other institutional investors. The Nikkei soared 227.05 to 36,286.92.

HONG KONG — Stocks were lower with no interesting corporate news to puncture the cloak of indifference smothering trading interest. The Hang Seng Index slipped 5.17 to 2,812.02.

SINGAPORE — The stock market closed on a firm note after share prices rose sharply across the board. The Straits Times Index jumped 12.25 points to 1,361.67.

BOMBAY — Shares finished mixed on heavy institutional buying after the market opened shakily as India's general elections began.

FRANKFURT — Closed for holiday.

ZURICH — Shares closed slightly higher on selective demand. The All-Share Swiss Performance Index rose 3.7 points to 1,107.0.

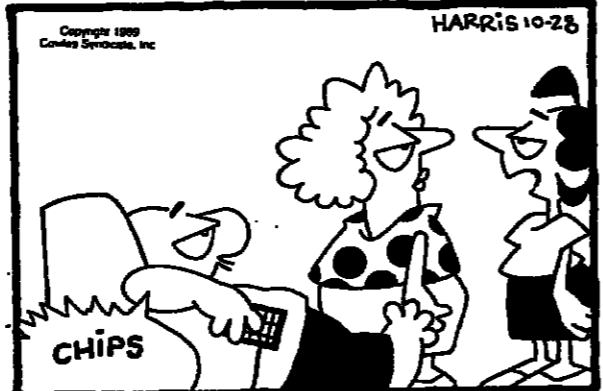
PARIS — French share prices were steady but off highs in quiet trading by midday. The CAC-40 index was up 2.42 points to 1,827.63 at 1230 GMT.

LONDON — Shares were mostly firmer in late trading with investors noticeable absent as caution stifled business. By 1535 GMT the FTSE-100 index was 5.7 points up to 2,190.8.

NEW YORK — Wall Street Blue chips kept their early gains, advancing slightly in light trading ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday. The Dow rose 9.60 to 2649.

THE BETTER HALF.

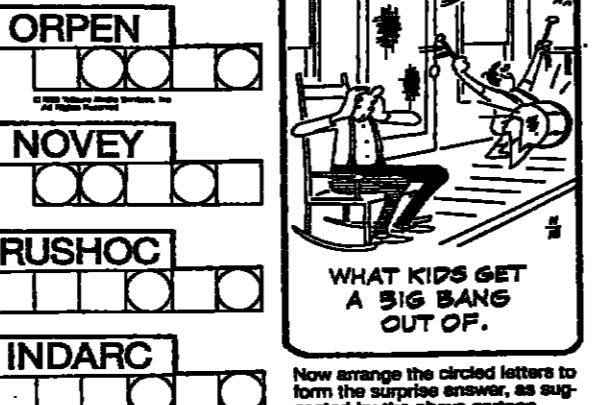
By Harris



"Stanley took an aptitude test once. It said he should have been a sofa cushion."

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

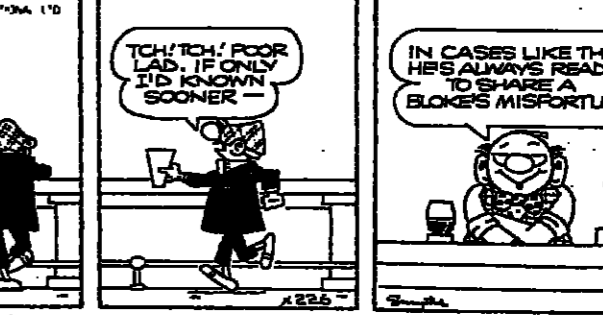


Answer: THE CURIO BANDY PREACH MYSELF
Yesterday's Jumble: CURIO BANDY PREACH MYSELF
Answer: What dry-as-dust people never seem to do—DRY UP

Peanuts



Mutt'n Jeff



Andy Capp



